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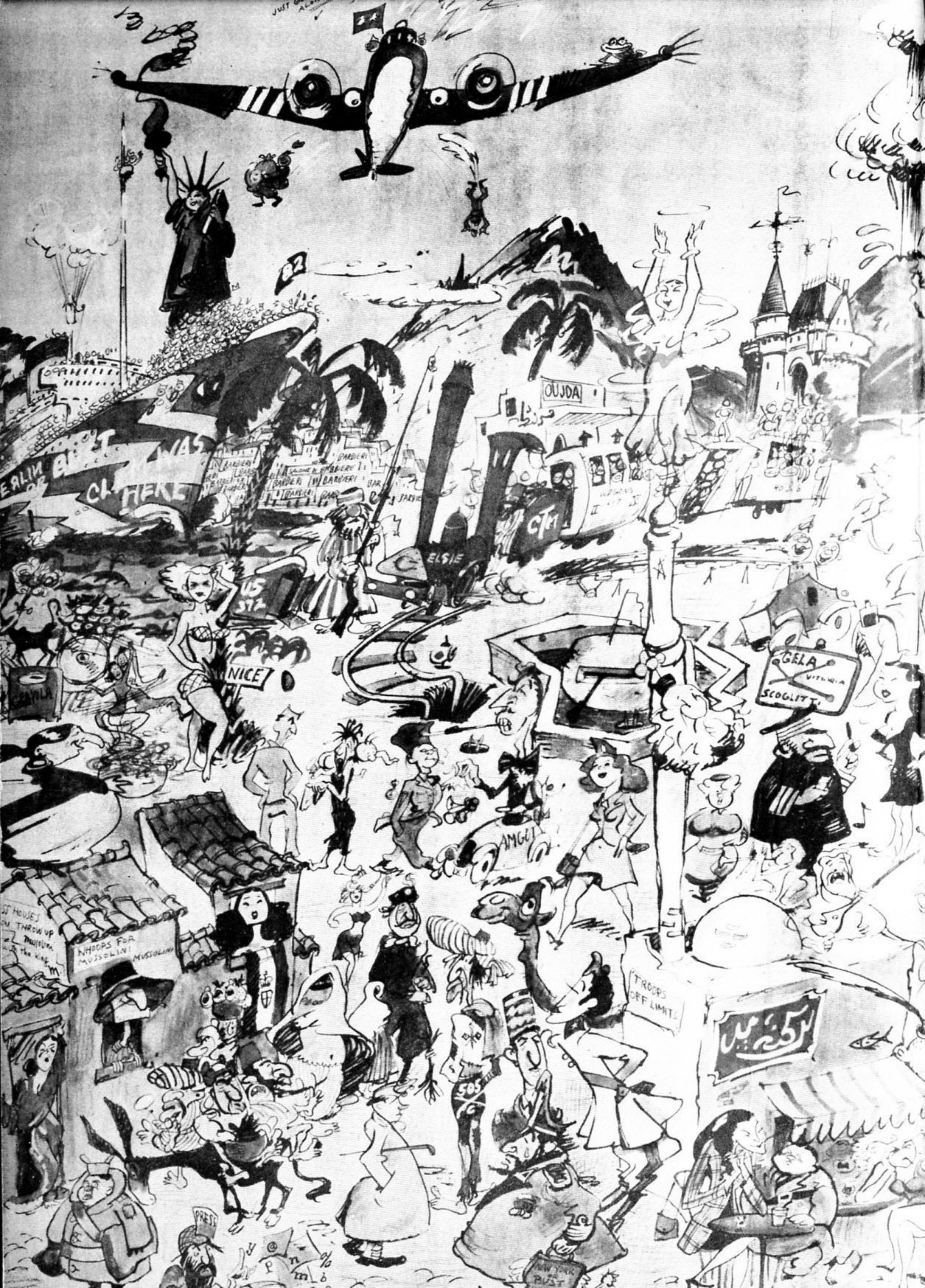
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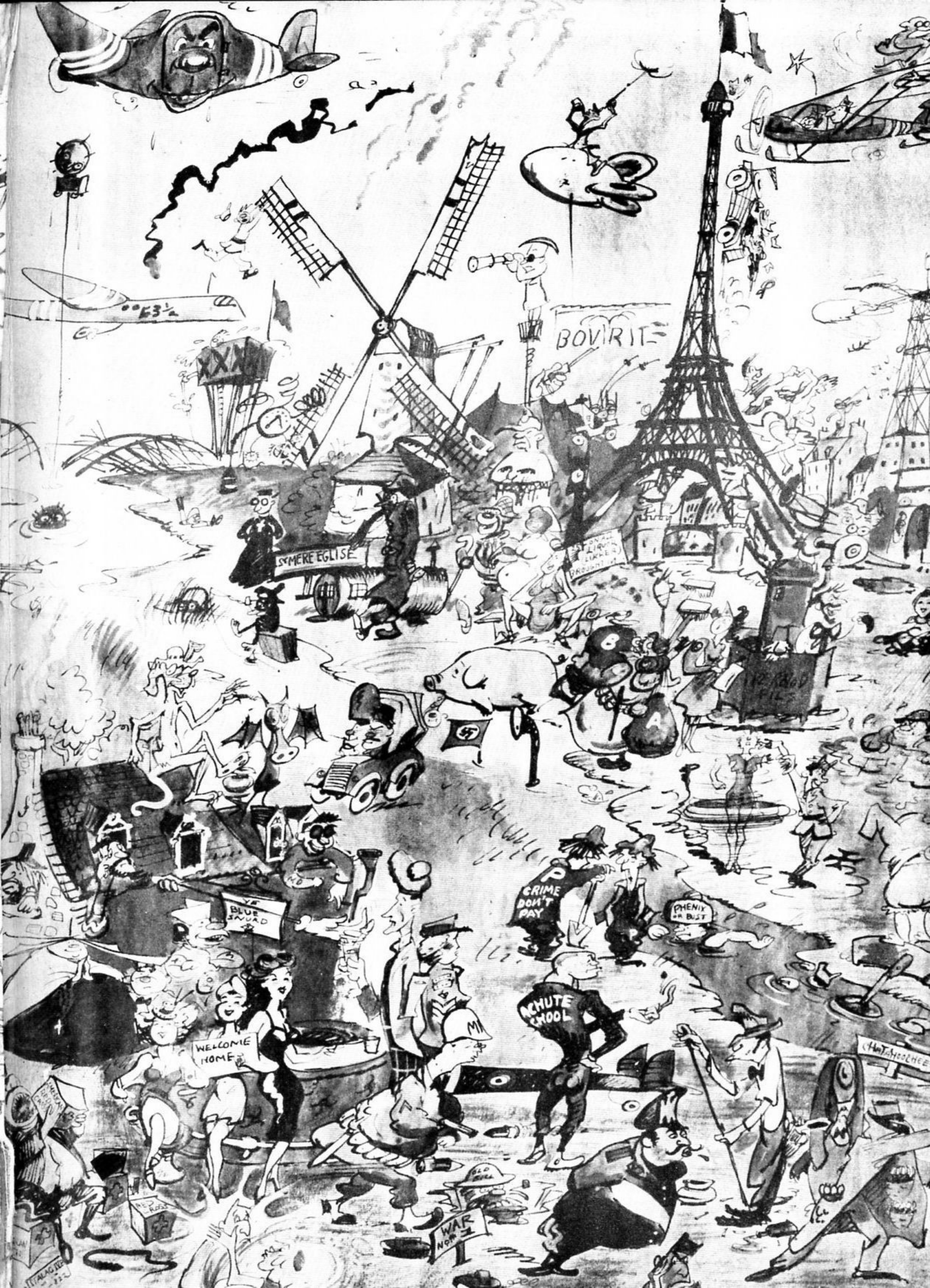
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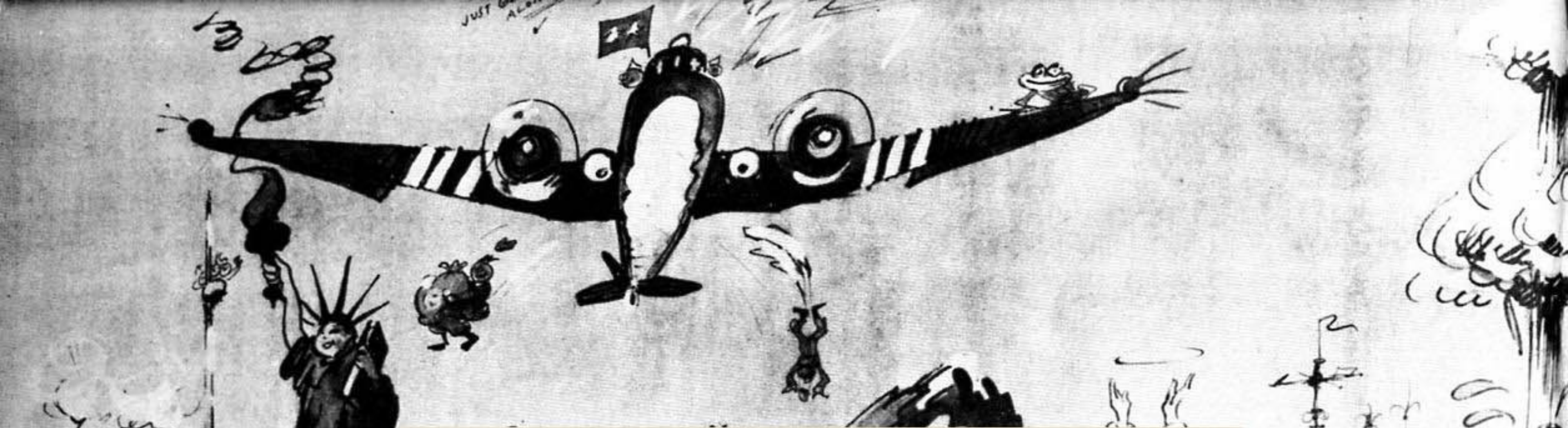

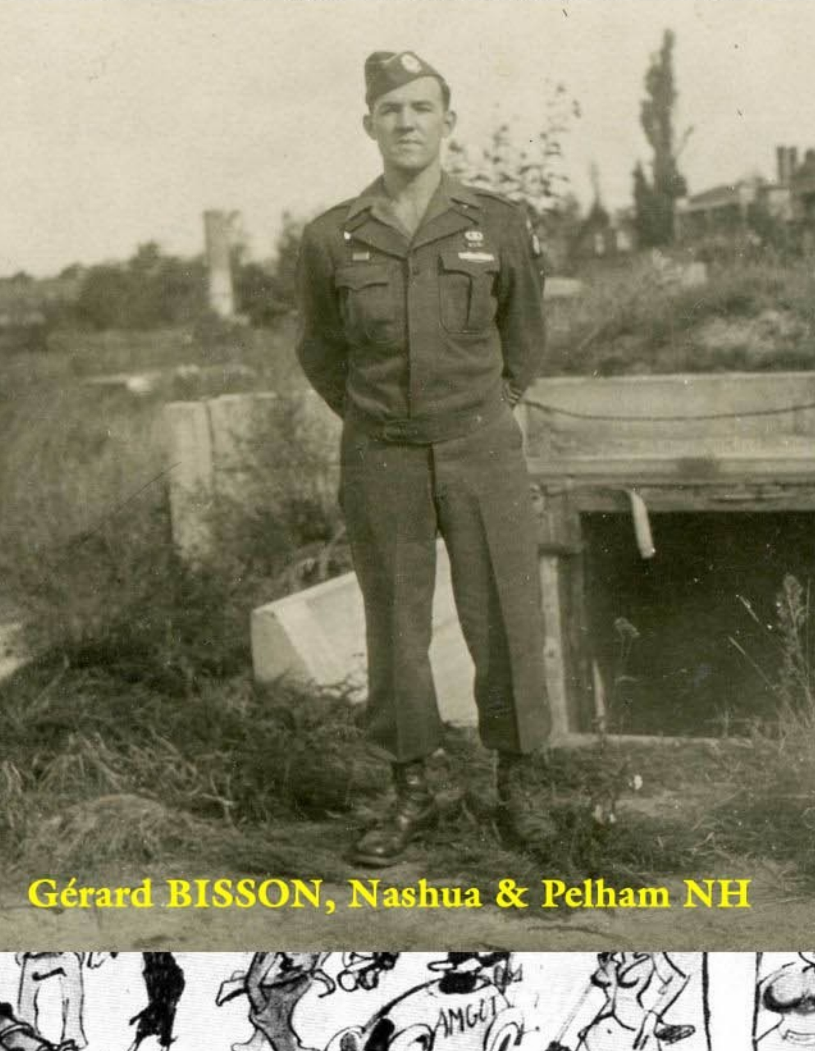

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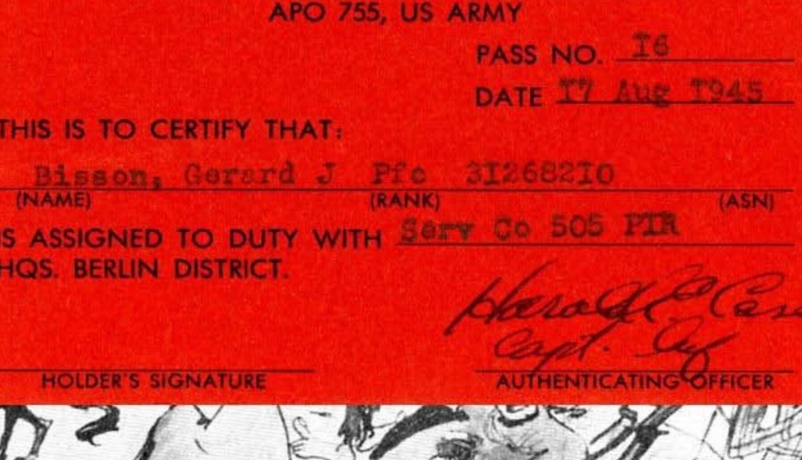


US HEADQUARTERS BERLIN DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHALL
APO 755, US ARMY

PASS NO. 16
DATE 17 Aug 1945

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

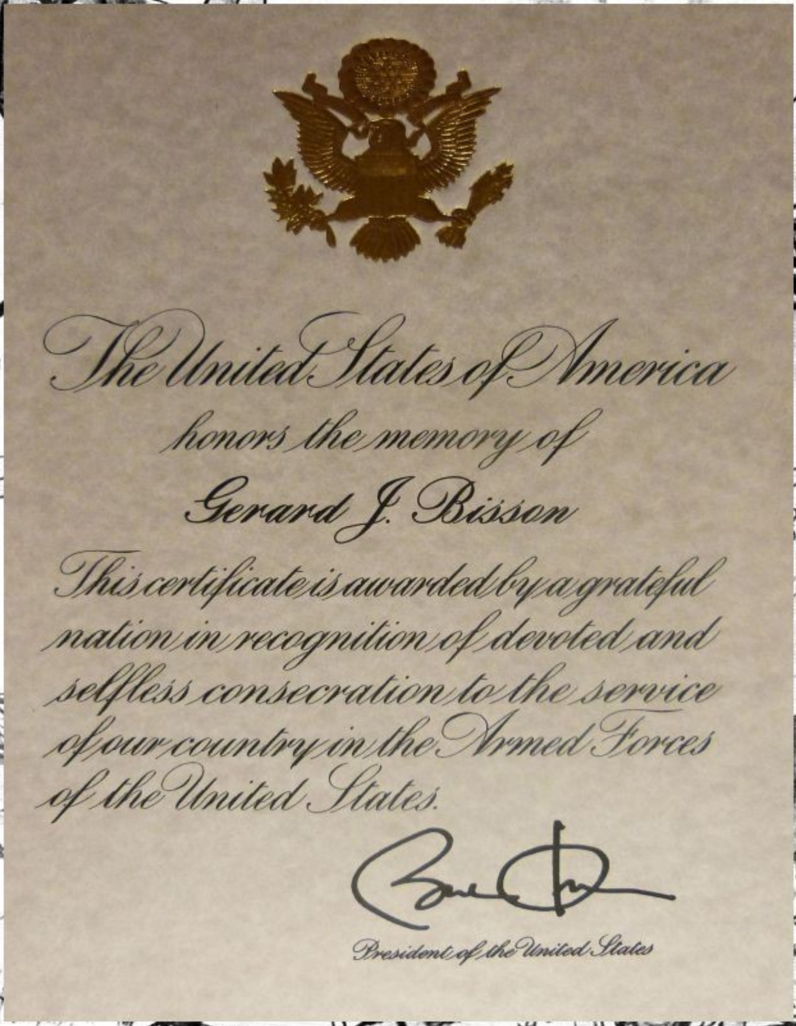
Bisson, Gerard J Pfc 31268210
(NAME) (RANK) (ASN)

IS ASSIGNED TO DUTY WITH Serv Co 505 PIR
HQS. BERLIN DISTRICT.

Harold L Case
Capt. Inf

HOLDER'S SIGNATURE

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



The United States of America

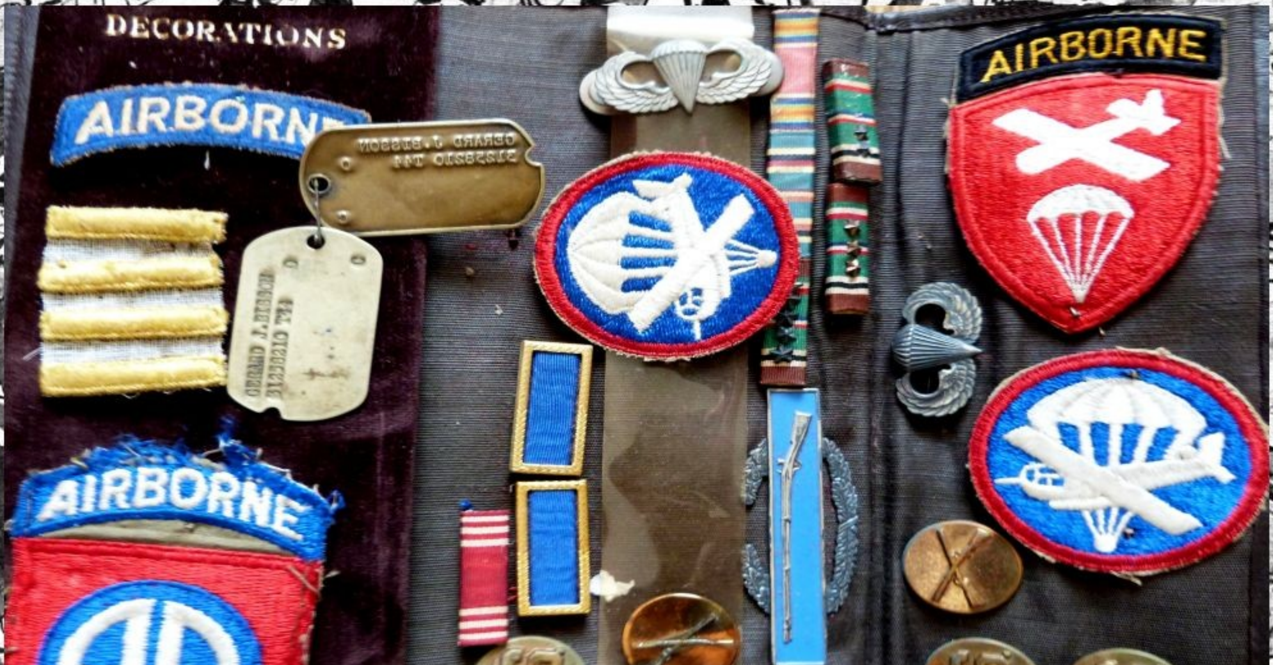
honors the memory of

Gerard J. Bisson

This certificate is awarded by a grateful nation in recognition of devoted and selfless consecration to the service of our country in the Armed Forces of the United States.

President of the United States

OVERLORD 6 JUIN 1944
UTAH OMAHA
GOLD JUNO SWORD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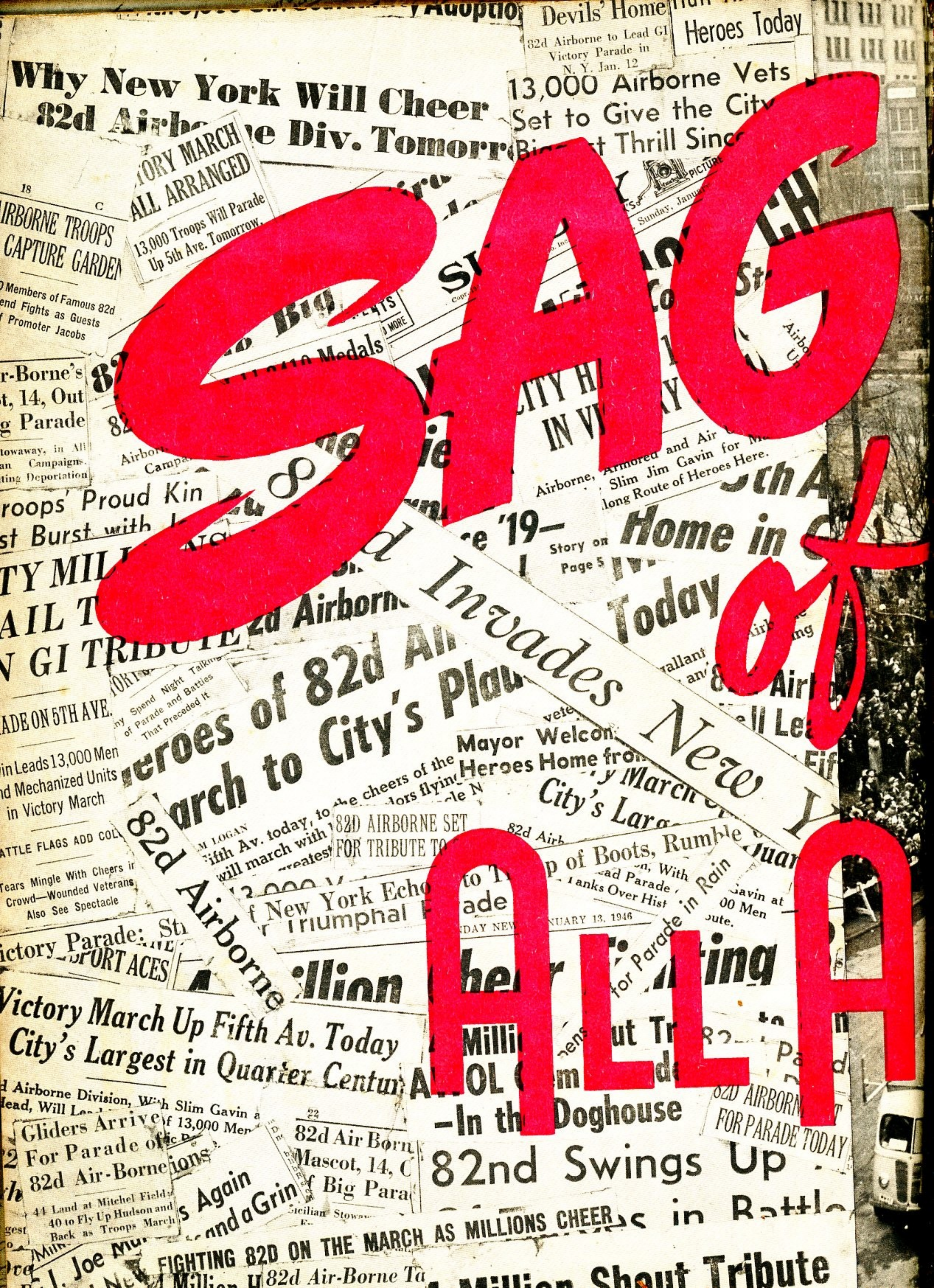

SAG of ALLA

Why New York Will Cheer 82d Airborne Div. Tomorr

Devils' Home

82d Airborne to Lead GI Victory Parade in N. Y. Jan. 12

Heroes Today

13,000 Airborne Vets Set to Give the City Big ... Thrill Sinc

VICTORY MARCH ALL ARRANGED

13,000 Troops Will Parade Up 5th Ave. Tomorrow

AIRBORNE TROOPS CAPTURE GARDEN

... Members of Famous 82d ... Fights as Guests ... Promoter Jacobs

Air-Borne's ... 14, Out ... Parade

Stowaway, in All ... Campaigns ... Deportation

Troops' Proud Kin ... Burst with ...

Airborne, Armored and Air ... Slim Jim Gavin for M... Along Route of Heroes Here.

Home in ...

Today

Story on Page 5

82d Invades New Y

Heroes of 82d Ai... March to City's Pla...

... Spend Night Talking of Parade and Battles That Preceded It

PARADE ON 5TH AVE.

Gavin Leads 13,000 Men and Mechanized Units in Victory March

BATTLE FLAGS ADD COL

Tears Mingle With Cheers in Crowd—Wounded Veterans Also See Spectacle

Mayor Welcom... Heroes Home from...

Victory March ... City's Larg...

82D AIRBORNE SET FOR TRIBUTE TO

... of Boots, Rumble ... Tanks Over Hist...

New York Echo... Triumphal Parade

82d Airborne

... for Parade in Rain

Victory Parade: ... SPORT ACES

Victory March Up Fifth Av. Today City's Largest in Quarter Century

... Airborne Division, With Slim Gavin a... Head, Will Lead ... of 13,000 Men

Gliders Arrive For Parade of 82d Air-Borne ...

44 Land at Mitchel Field; 40 to Fly Up Hudson and Back as Troops March

82d Air Borne Mascot, 14, ... of Big Parad...

AWOL ... —In the Doghouse

82nd Swings Up

82D AIRBORNE SET FOR PARADE TODAY

FIGHTING 82D ON THE MARCH AS MILLIONS CHEER

... Million Shout Tribute

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COMMEMORATE THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
THE INAUGURATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON
FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
ERECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

TO THE VALIANT MEN
OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND
AIRBORNE DIVISION
WHOSE DESTINY LAID
THEM TO REST IN THE
FIELDS OF
SICILY
ITALY
FRANCE
HOLLAND
BELGIUM
&
GERMANY

To the members of the 82d Airborne Division. With everlasting admiration, affection and appreciation of life shared with them in the service of our country. May their incomparable courage, fidelity, soldierly conduct and fighting spirit ever keep for this Division a place second to none in our army.

Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway

MATTHEW B. RIDGWAY was born 3 March 1895. He graduated from the U. S. Military Academy in 1917. After varied assignments and study in the service schools, he went to the Philippines, where he served as Technical Advisor to the Governor General in 1932-33. He then attended C&GS School, and upon completion of the two-year course became AC/S, G-3, 6th Corps Area, AC/S Second Army, and Deputy C/S Second Army.

The year 1937 found Major Ridgway at the Army War College, after which he became AC/S, G-3, Fourth Army until 1939, when he accompanied General Marshall to Brazil. Hitler attacked Poland 1 September 1939 and Major Ridgway joined the war plans division WD General Staff. Here he worked and dreamed and planned until the 82d Infantry Division was reactivated. The 82d Infantry Division was reactivated on 25 March 1942 at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana under Brig. General Omar N. Bradley with Brigadier General Ridgway as assistant Division Commander. Major General Matthew B. Ridgway succeeded to the command on 26 June 1942. On the 15th of August its designation was changed to 82d Airborne Division, Major General Ridgway commanding.

Under the wise leadership and skillful handling of its new commander, the 82d soon developed into the most promising among the new units being quickly whipped into shape. On 15 August, rumor became reality and the 82d was designated as an airborne division. One half its strength was subtracted to form the 101st Airborne Division. Ground training in new techniques commenced at Camp Claiborne. About 1 October, the Division had a foretaste of the future by shifting to Fort Bragg in the largest airborne troop movement ever attempted by the Army. Advanced ground training in alternation with flight exercises by both troop transport and parachute and by troop transport and gliders was pushed rigorously.

In the short space of eight months Major General Ridgway changed the 82d from a brave dream into a deadly fighting machine. This amazing transformation was due entirely to the imagination and the initiative and the will power of a leader who was resolved that his command should become the premier airborne division of the Army, the first overseas and the first into battle. On 20 April 1942, the troopers left Ft. Bragg enroute for the combat zone.

What the 82d Airborne Division accomplished in those 32 glorious months of duty in the Mediterranean and European Theatres is a matter of history. Major General Ridgway left his hallmark on the "All Americans." This was the man whose foresight carried beyond the doubts of the supreme command in the dark days of 1943 to envision the decisive role that airborne elements would play when the real test would come with the invasion of Fortress Europe.

In July 1943, he launched his warriors into the skies of Tunisia and they came to earth in Sicily. The gales which almost postponed the mission played havoc with troop transport planes one night, and friendly AA guns shot down many of the planes another night. The destiny of the airborne hung in the balance for many weeks thereafter until General Ridgway's convictions prevailed. Then General Clark called for help at Salerno. Eight hours later General Ridgway delivered the 504th to the Fifth Army in Italy and the following night the 505. The Division assisted the Fifth Army from the trap that the Germans were about to spring.

The task of preparing the 82d for the Normandy invasion was stupendous. The genius of General Ridgway was apparent in every phase of preparation. As dawn was breaking in the Norman sky on D-Day, 6 June 1944, he stood calmly in a small orchard and listened to the first reports of troops in combat. The now effective strength of the Division at that moment was 800 men. At 1500 hours that afternoon, a count of elements in contact accounted for 1586 effectives. It was a situation that might undermine the spirit of a lesser man, but General Ridgway refused to think of discouragement. He and his division drove on without relief for over a month in some of the war's hardest fighting, to take every objective assigned.

On the 10th of August 1944 Major General Ridgway assembled his reorganized division for a review by General Eisenhower. He saw effected one of the miracles of modern war. Those proud troopers from Normandy's bloody fields had again demonstrated their quality and the genius of their leader. In less than one month the 82d was ready for the new mission. Speaking of Normandy General Eisenhower said "In spite of the skill and bravery of the Fourth Division, I doubt whether I would have ordered that attack without you fellows during the first critical hours and first critical days. Without you fellows it would have been a much more terrible decision for me to make, so I do owe you a tremendous debt of gratitude. I'm going to owe you more in the future." On that day, the Supreme Commander said that the sight of the 82d Airborne Division marching past was "giving me inspiration such as I had never before had in this war."

And in those words he unconsciously paid a greater tribute to the achievements of Major General Matthew B. Ridgway than any then realized. In August, the XVIII Corps (Airborne) was born and General Ridgway became its commander.

DECORATIONS—The Distinguished Service Cross, an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster; Silver Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster and the Purple Heart. His foreign decorations, in order of receipt, include Order of Southern Cross, Grade of Officer, (Brazil); Legion of Honor, Grade of Officer, (France); Croix de Guerre with palm (France); Commander of the Bath (England); Order of the Red Banner (Russia); Order of Counts Maurice and Lazarus, Grand Cordon (Italy); and the Belgian Commander of the Order of Leopold with palm and Croix de Guerre with palm.

To the troopers of the 82d Airborne Division, who with courage and determination in their hearts, carried the fight to the enemy from Africa to Berlin. It has been a great privilege to have served in your ranks.

Maj. Gen. James M. Gavin

JAMES M. GAVIN was born in New York, New York on 22 March 1907. He served as private, private first class and corporal in the 16th and 2d Coast Artillery Regiments, Regular Army, 24 April to 30 June 1925. He graduated from the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, with a Bachelor of Science degree and was commissioned a 2d Lt., Infantry on 13 June 1929.

In August 1941 he attended the Parachute School and upon graduation was assigned to the 503d Parachute Battalion. In December 1941 he was made Plans and Training Officer of the Provisional Parachute Group at Fort Benning, Ga. In September 1942 he attended the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. and upon graduation was assigned to the Airborne Command at Fort Bragg, N. C. as G-3.

He became Commanding Officer of the 505th Parachute Infantry in July 1942 and remained in that command when the regiment was assigned to the 82d Airborne Division in January 1943. The 82d Airborne Division went overseas in April and the 505th Parachute Combat Team under the command of Colonel Gavin spearheaded the assault of Sicily on the night of 9 July 1943. He commanded the regiment in the parachute landing on Salerno Bay the night of 14 Sept. 1943 and the following month was made Assistant Division Commander of the 82d Airborne Division while on duty in Naples, Italy.

In November 1943 he was placed on Temporary Duty with COSSAC, London, England as Airborne Advisor to the Supreme Commander, remaining on that duty until about 1 Feb. when he returned to duty with the division which had now arrived at Leicester, England.

In the Normandy invasion on the night of 5-6 June 1944 he commanded the parachute assault echelon of the 82d Airborne Division, consisting of the 505th, 507th, and 508th Infantries. Upon being relieved from the Normandy front, the division returned to England in July of 1944 and on 15 Aug. 1944 General Gavin assumed command of the division.

As Division Commander he commanded the division in the airborne operation in the vicinity of Nijmegen, Holland in the fall of 1944, the Battle of the Bulge the following winter, and the spring offensive of 1945, until the surrender of the German Army.

The division was assigned to duty in Berlin, Germany in July of 1945 where General Gavin served as American representative on the City Kommandantura until the division left that city in Oct. 1945.

The division returned to Fort Bragg, N. C., via New York, where it is now serving.

DECORATIONS—Distinguished Service Cross; Oak Leaf Cluster to Distinguished Service Cross; Distinguished Service Medal; Silver Star Medal; Oak Leaf Cluster to Silver Star Medal; Purple Heart Medal; Bronze Star Medal; British Distinguished Service Order; Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau, degree of Grand-Officer; Belgian Croix de Guerre, 1940 avec Palme; Belgian Commandant de L'Odre couronne avec Palme; French Croix de Guerre, L'Ordre de la Legion D'Honneur; French Croix de Guerre avec Palme; Russian Order of Alexander Nevsky; American Defense Ribbon; European Theatre of Operations Ribbon with six campaign stars and one invasion spearhead; European Theatre Army of Occupation Ribbon; Victory Medal; Presidential Unit Citation; Combat Infantryman Badge; Dutch Order of Willem (awarded to 82d Airborne Division); French Fourragere (awarded to 82d Airborne Division); Belgian Fourragere (awarded to 82d Airborne Division); Parachutists Wings with four combat-jump stars.

General Ridgway, of the XVIII Airborne Corps, confers with General Gavin, 82d Commander, at a critical moment during the battle of the Bulge. These two made military history by molding Airborne Warfare

AIRBORNE
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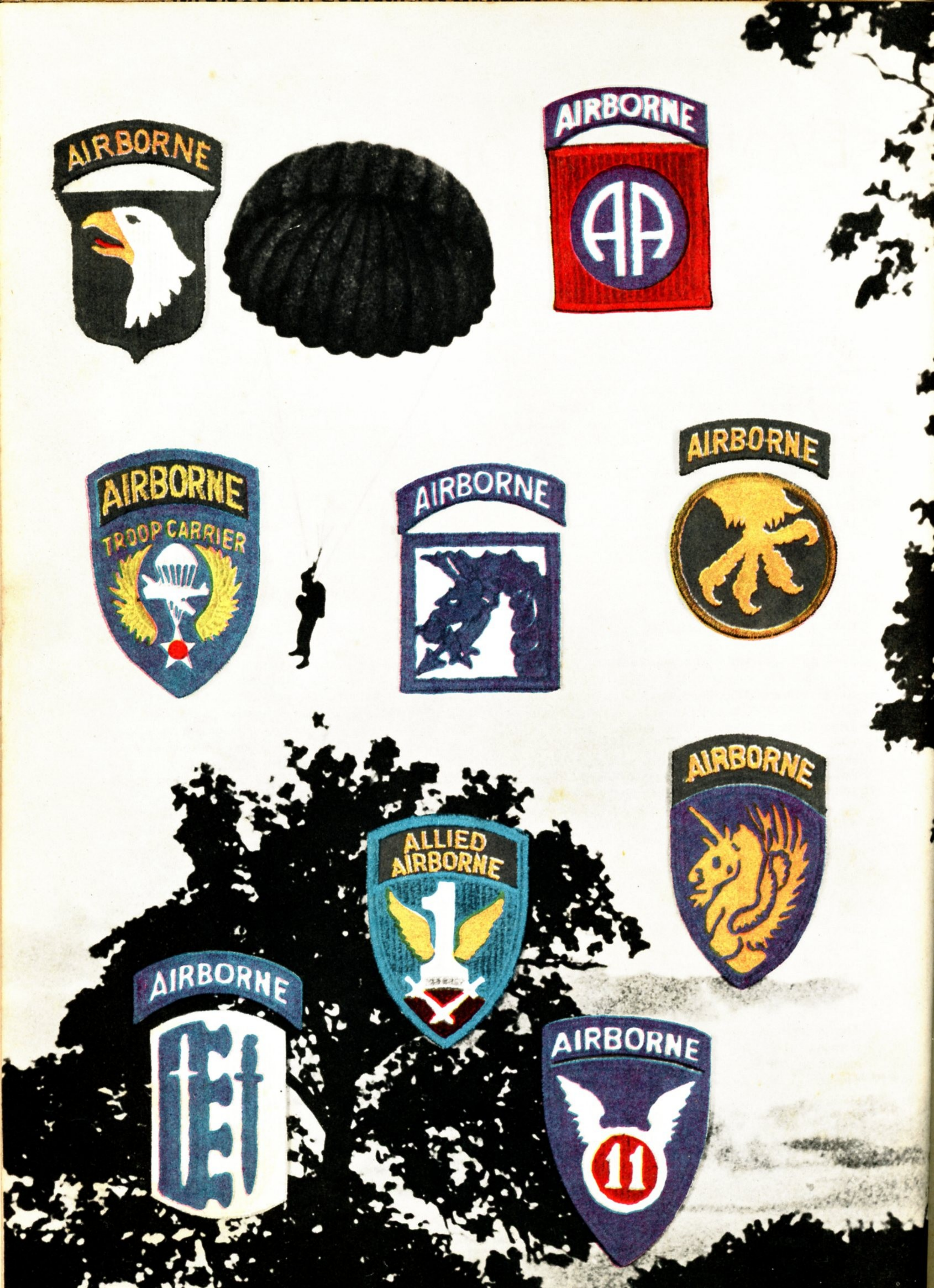
General John Gavin, Commander
82nd Airborne Division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EVOLUTION OF THE AIRBORNE PATCH

THE STORY of the 82nd is the story of Airborne. The 82nd shoulder patch, like the 82nd, dates back to World War I. It has Infantry beginnings as do all Airborne Divisions, and was called "All American" because the old 82nd had men from every state.

In August, 1942, the old 82nd Infantry Division Patch, worn by Sgt. York and Jonathan Wainwright in 1918 and Omar Bradley in 1942, had Airborne added when the "All American" became the first Airborne Division. Simultaneously, the 101st Airborne and its Screaming Eagle Patch was born out of the old 82nd, beginning a friendly rivalry that lasted until the end of the war when the Screaming Eagle again became part of the 82nd Airborne.

The history of the Airborne Shoulder loop, between the going and coming of the Eagle, has been the combat story of Airborne.

When Mathew Ridgway's 82nd Airborne carried the "All American" patch into Sicily, an Airborne tradition began. In Italy, the double A enhanced this tradition and in Normandy, joined by the 101st, 82nd men again led a D-Day invasion by hours.

Back in England, preparing for Holland, the 1st Allied Airborne Army was born. Glider pilots and C-47 crews, long tested in carrying their human cargo to the danger points behind the enemy lines, were awarded a new Airborne Troop Carrier Patch, and Mathew Ridgway, with his 82nd General Staff, formed the new 18th Airborne Corps. With James M. Gavin, Commanding the 82nd, Maxwell Taylor, the 101st and William Miley, the newly arrived 17th Airborne, Ridgway had his former 82nd Lieutenants well distributed when the Battle of the Bulge was in full swing. The 82nd stopped and turned Von Rundstedt on the Northern Flank; the Screaming Eagles became the heroes of Bastogne on the south, and the 17th Talons clawed away at the western perimeter. Troop Carriers brought resupply to the Battered Bastards of Bastogne, as they had to Patton's tanks on the mechanized march to Metz.

The next Airdrop was the Rhine Crossing. The 13th (Unicorn) Airborne had arrived, but only one Division was needed and the 17th won the nod. Their talons were sharpened for the drop at Wessel, Germany. The 13th prepared for an airdrop in the mountains near Stuttgart but that also was canceled. The rest of the action in Europe was fierce, but grounded. The 17th, 101st, 82nd, 13th, Troop Carrier and 18th Corps all had their part.

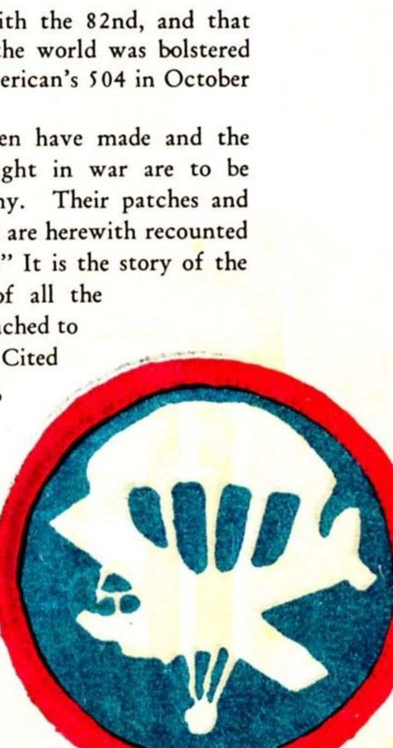
When V-E Day came, the 82nd was 50 miles across the Elbe in Ludwigslust, fighting the Germans with the English as they often had and meeting the Russians, first on the northern front. The 101st was in Hitler's winter redoubt near Austria. After V-E Day, the 17th Airborne was split beween its two older brothers as high pointers from all Airborne Units used the Talon as a redeployment vehicle. The 82nd, filled with new 17th men, headed for Berlin, where under the 1st Airborne Army they had the job of administering and policing the American Berlin District.

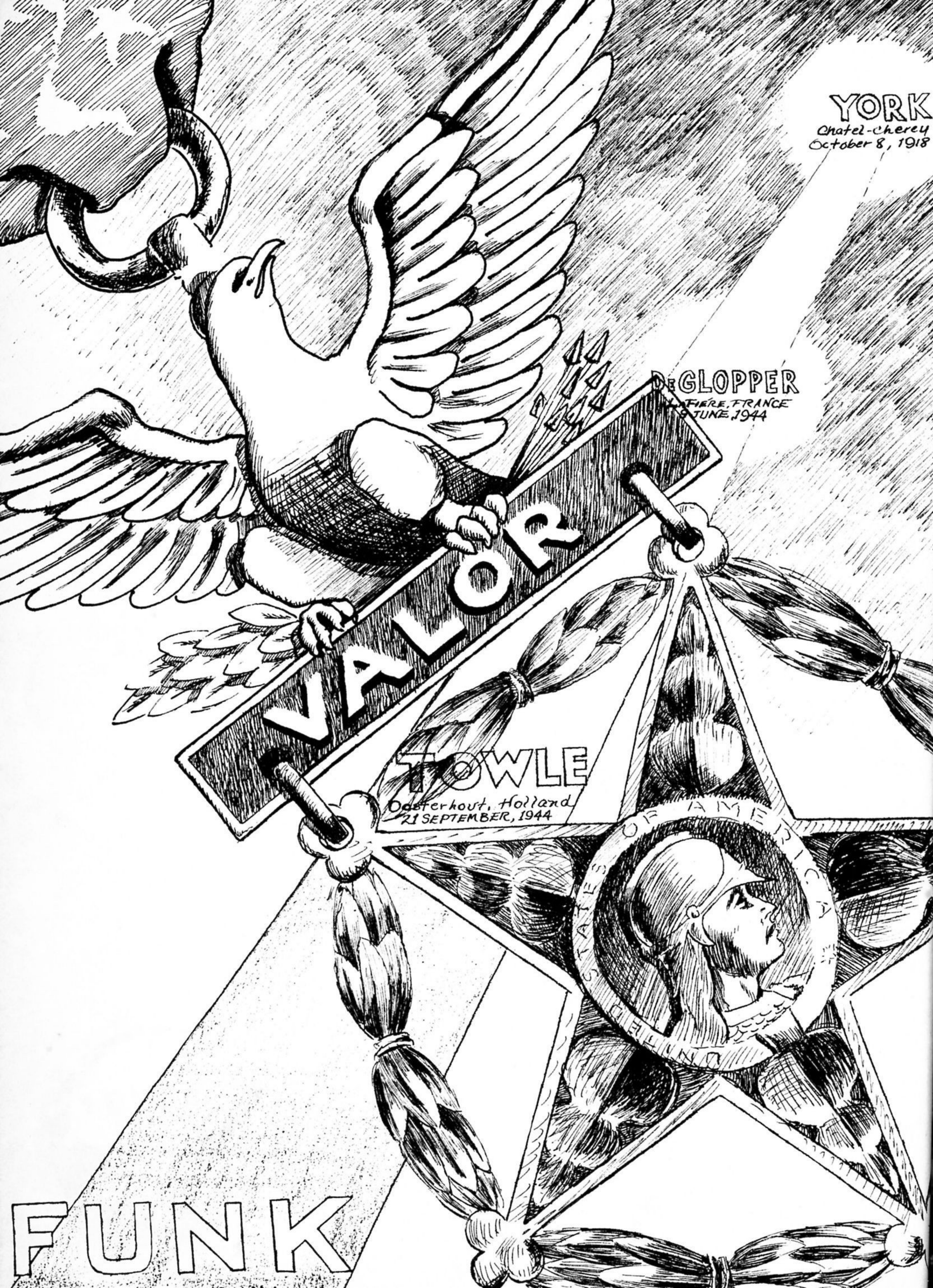
The 13th and the 18th Corps were on their way to the Pacific where an ex 82nd Artillery General, Joseph Swing, already was in combat on Luzon with the 11th Airborne. Before the 13th and XVIII Corps arrived, the Jap War was also over. The 11th landed first on Japan — 18th Corps and Allied Airborne Army broke up, as had the 17th. The 101st and 13th were absorbed by the 82nd, and the evolution of the Airborne shoulder patch in World War II was complete.

Throughout the war, smaller Airborne Units, not necessarily with a Division, were also writing combat history — the 503 on New Guinea — the 509 in Africa, Italy and southern France with the Airborne Task Force — the 2nd Parachute Brigade made up of the 507 and 508, which fought with the 82nd in Normandy — the 517th veterans of southern France and heroes of St. Vith — the 550 and 551st, Units which went from Panama to the Bulge via southern France, and the Italians veterans of the Special Service Forces.

All but the 503 fought with the 82nd, and that unit on the opposite side of the world was bolstered by A Company of the All American's 504 in October of 1942.

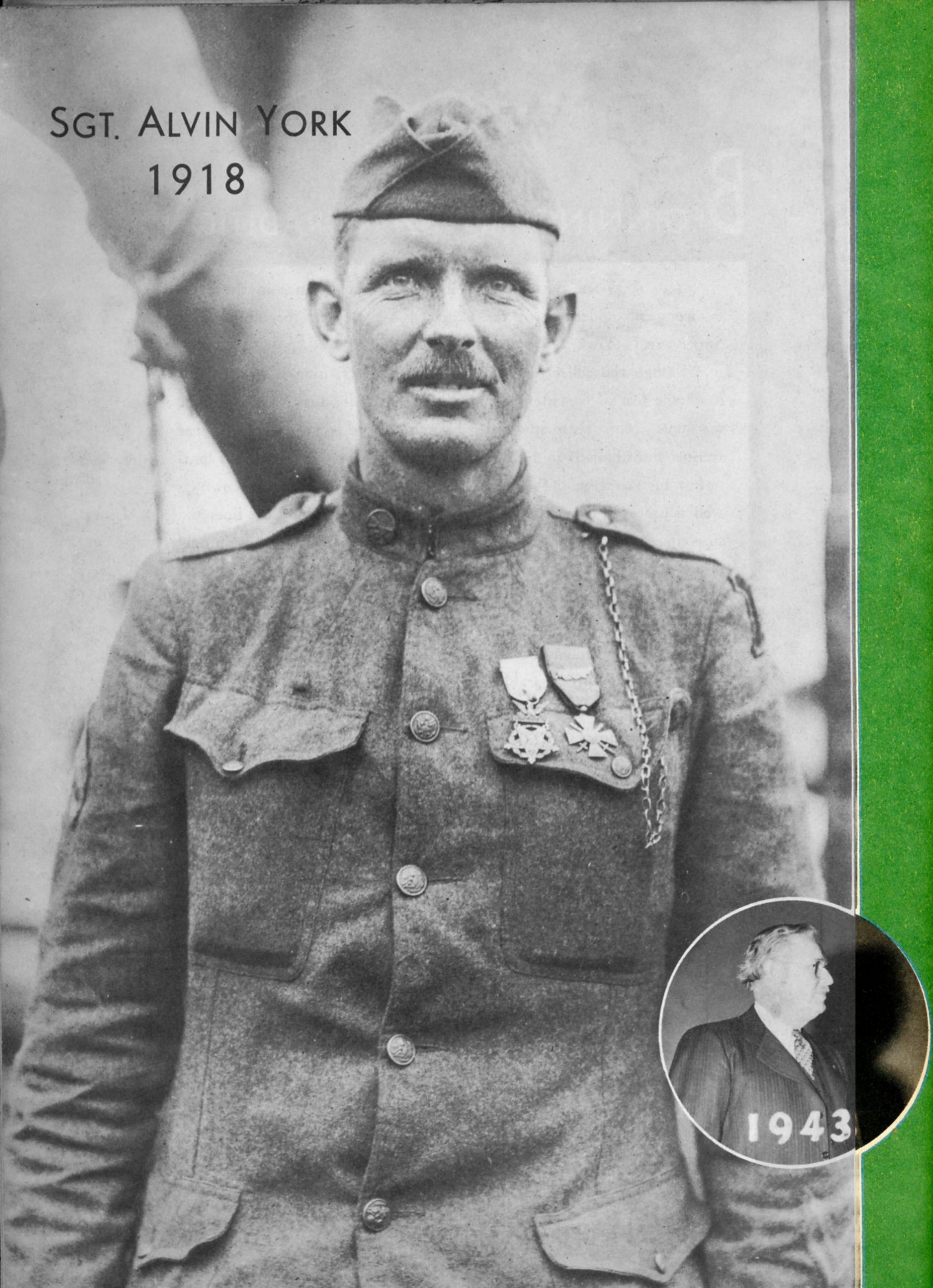
The sacrifice that these men have made and the achievement they have wrought in war are to be preserved in the Regular Army. Their patches and part of their combat traditions are herewith recounted in "Saga of the All American." It is the story of the 82nd, of the Airborne and of all the men and Units assigned or attached to the "All American" Division. Cited as a unit by the Belgian, Dutch and French governments the 82nd Airborne, most decorated Division in World War II stands as a symbol in the highest tradition of the United States Army.




YORK
Chatel-Cherey
October 8, 1918
DeGLOPPER
La Fiere, France
9 June, 1944
VALOR
TOWLE
Oosterhout, Holland
21 SEPTEMBER, 1944
STATES OF AMERICA
FUNK

WORLD WAR ONE

MEUSE ARGONNE • St. MIHIEL • LORRAINE



SGT. ALVIN YORK
1918

BEGINNING AN 82ND TRADITION

THE TRADITION of individual self reliance in the Paratroopers and glidermen of the 82nd Division had its beginning with Sgt. Alvin C. York.

Although the collective record of the 82nd Division is its most remarkable feat of consistent performance, the individual also has unique tradition. More than any other branch of the service, the Airborne trooper finds himself in a position where his ability to take care of himself is his salvation. Trained to meet every situation on his own as well as part of a team, the air soldier when dropped behind the lines and surrounded must fight his way out again and again against seemingly impossible odds. His is a dangerous existence of kill or be killed, and quite often both. He is traditionally aggressive. The precedent for his individual self reliance and his stomach for aggressiveness dates back to World War I when his Division, the same 82nd "All American" Division boasted the incomparable Tennessee elder, Sgt. Alvin C. York. In York, the most famous of all 82nd troopers, a tradition was born. Every 82nd soldier knows of this heritage—how civilian Alvin York, a turkey shooting Tennessee mountaineer, church elder and conscientious objector became Corporal York of "G" Company, 328th Infantry, 82nd Division, killing 20 Germans on October 8, 1918—how he further captured 132 prisoners, including a Major and three lieutenants, put 35 machine guns out of business thereby breaking up an entire German battalion which was about to counter attack against the Americans on Hill 223 in the Argonne Sector near Chatel-Chehery. York outfought the German machine gun battalion with nothing but his rifle and an automatic pistol. There were seven other Americans who witnessed the fight, but it was York's battle and only York's. But for him, not a man of them would have come out alive except as prisoners. His was the greatest individual feat of World War I and it has stood through two World Wars as a legend for the men in the 82nd Division to shoot at. How well they have met the challenge is herewith related in "Saga of the "All American."

1918

The 82nd Infantry Division, 1918, father of the present 82nd Airborne, boasts a record of having been in the lines for longer consecutive period than any other American Division in World War I. The name of the old 82nd is perpetuated by its two famous sons, Sergeant Alvin York and General (then Major) Jonathan "Skinny" Wainwright. It is also perpetuated in the new 82nd Airborne Division, which wears the "All American" Patch and carries battle streamers with the magic names Lorraine, St. Mihiel, and Meuse Argonne—streamers now flying alongside Sicily, Naples-Fogia, Rome-Arno, Normandy, Holland, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe on the "All American" flag of the Eighty-two Airborne Division. In some intangible manner that few can clearly depict, the reputations of great fighting organizations imbue successive commanders with a sense of pride and responsibility to the past. Old history makes new history, and the achievements of the 82nd Infantry Division in the first World War must unwittingly have had some bearing on the leadership and command of the 82nd Airborne Division in World War II.

Beginning August 25, 1917, the 82nd Infantry Division was assembled at Camp Gordon, Georgia under the command of Major General Eben Smith. He was succeeded by Brigadier General James B. Erwin on 27 November, who in turn gave way to Brigadier General William P. Burnham on 26 December, 1917.

Training was completed by April, 1918, and the 82nd Infantry Division became the second National Army division to sail for Europe when it left New York on 25 April, 1918. It landed in Liverpool, England on 7 May, 1918 and moved via Southamption to Le Havre. It is interesting to recall that the 325th Infantry Regiment was reviewed by the King in London.

Intensive training was completed by mid-June, and the Division moved into the quiet Lagny sector of the Woevre front. Action was sporadic and light, and casualties were only slightly over 300. In July, Allied strategy was committed to the offensive and contemplated the reduction of certain salients which interfered with communications essential to further offensive operations. One of these was the St. Mihiel Salient.

On August 19, 1918, the 82nd Division relieved the 2nd Division in the Marbache Sector. On 12 September, as the right division of I Corps and the First Army, the 82nd conducted aggressive patrolling and raiding along its entire front with the mission of exerting pressure on the enemy's left flank. No important advances were registered, up to 13 September.

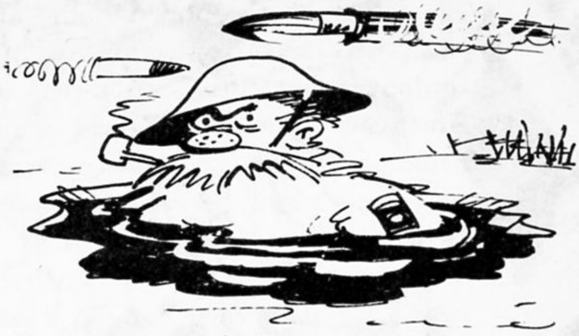
On that day, the 326th Infantry, west of the Moselle River, advanced north of Norhoy to protect the right of the adjacent 90th Division. From this position, the regiment moved forward on the 15th to the general line, Vandieres - Cote 327, to cover the advance of the 90th Division. Its mission accomplished, the regiment withdrew to high ground south of Vandieres. The St. Mihiel Offensive merged into Sector service on 17 September, and three days later the Division was relieved in the Marbache Sector by the French 69th Division. Casualties were in excess of 1,000.

On 25 September, 1918, as Army Reserve, First U. S. Army, the strength of the Division was 934 officers, 25,797 enlisted men and 5,646 animals.

Then came the great Meuse-Argonne Offensive, designed to sever the main artery of the German lateral supply lines, Carignan-Sedan-Mezieres, which would render German positions untenable in the region west and northwest of Sedan. Participation of the 82nd Division lasted from 29 September to 30 October, 1918. In the two-day attack against the east flank of the Argonne Forest, the Division suffered 1,782 casualties. Between 10 October and 19 October, the Division engaged in bitter fighting and pushed from the vicinity of Marcq across the Aire River to occupy St. Juvin and the area north of that town. Casualties during this period were exceedingly heavy and totalled 3,983. The results, however, contributed materially to the collapse of German arms during the weeks immediately following.

In the Meuse - Argonne Offensive, total casualties of the Division were 6,009. During this brief period of combat, members of the 82nd Division were awarded decorations as follows: 2 Congressional Medals of Honor, 3 Distinguished Service Medals and 75 Distinguished Service Crosses.

N PICTURES



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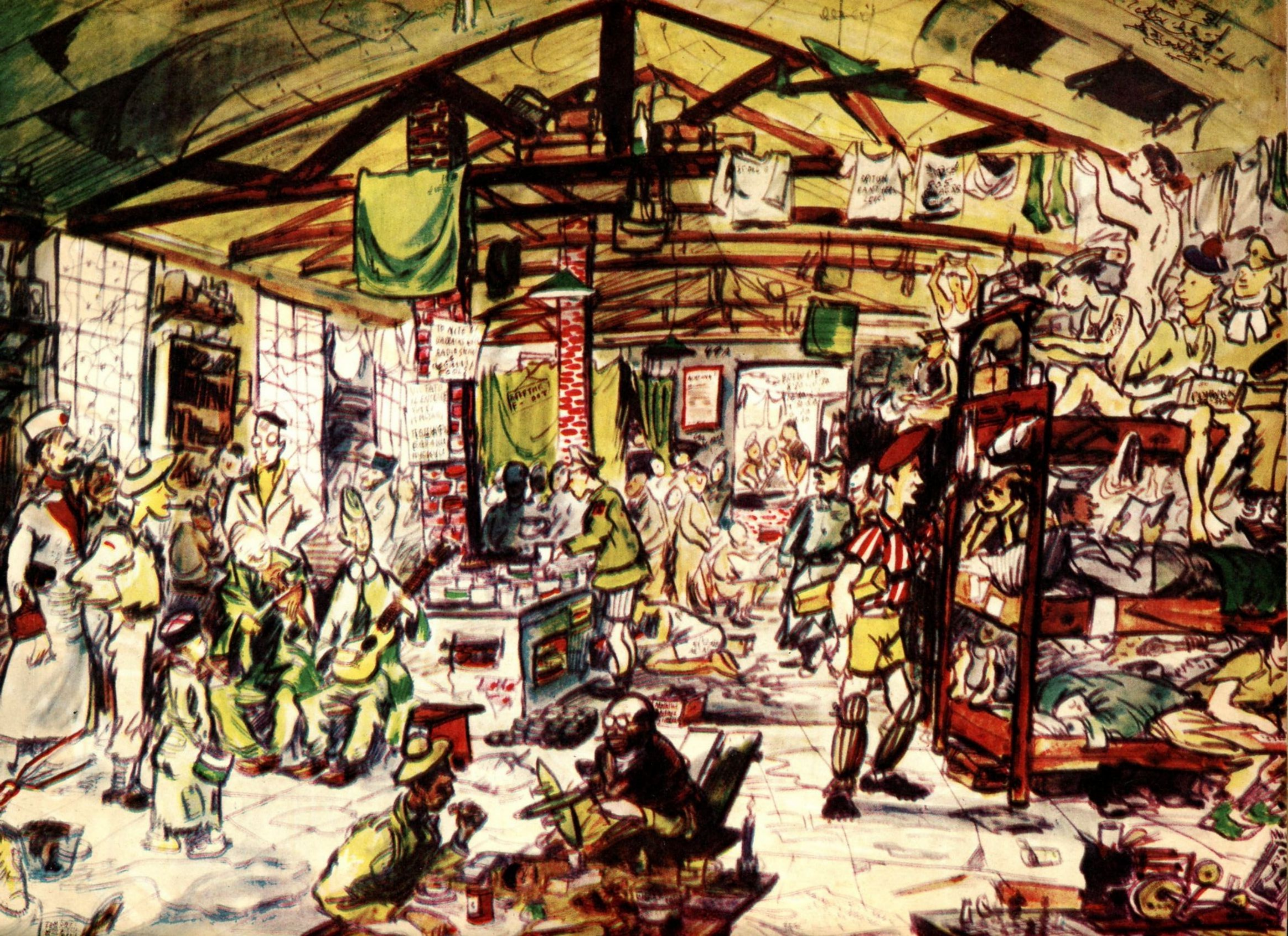


Color Plates by Prescott—

Left—The night the 504 was shot down over Sicily

Right—Life in a German Prisoner of War Camp

Stand up and Hook up!

An abbreviated version of "Stand Up and Hook Up" appeared in the Saturday Evening Post entitled 82nd Master of the Hot Spots.

By MARTHA GELLHORN

There are eighteen men in the plane, nine facing nine on the chromium bucket seats. The plane is that valuable drayhorse of war, the twin-engined C-47. Scores of other planes, still in formation, fly through the night and the wind, and in all of them sit the quiet men, heavy with equipment, rifle or tommy gun, ammunition, grenades, land mines, first-aid packets, rations and maps, perhaps a radio, a bazooka, or a light machine gun as well—one hundred pounds or more to carry to the ground. This is the long last waiting and their faces and their eyes are blank. What concerns each man now is entirely private and his empty face guards him, where he lives alone. The lucky ones sleep. After all there is nothing to do but wait, everything that can be known is known, the mind only uses itself looking backward or forward; it is good to sleep if you can.

No man was forced into these planes. Paratroopers are volunteers. There had been months of preparation for this ride, and there was a time, before a man earned and accepted his parachute wings, when he could reconsider and choose some other way to war. In the beginning, at jump school, they were driven through a course of training which was not only intended to harden them and teach them their new trade but was also meant to discourage them if possible. For weeks, from sunup till sundown, they ran until their lungs ached, did push-ups and sit-ups and twirled Indian clubs until their muscles knotted with pain, tumbled from platforms into sawdust pits until they were numb, stumbled and dragged on the ground behind opened chutes, blown by a wind machine, jumped from 35-foot towers and from 250-foot towers and learned to pack their chutes, with the chilling knowledge that they would use these same chutes on their first real jump. Finally, as one of them said, "preferring certain death to any more training," they were taken up in C-47's and twice a day they spilled themselves out; having overcome this daylight hazard, they tried it again at night.

After they got their wings, the training was no less rigorous, but at least there was some praise mixed with the punishment. Nothing that could be taught was left untaught; they were also told that one paratrooper was worth five of any other kind of man. Their confidence in themselves and their units and their division grew to be iron hard, and they were prepared to pay for this pride.

The time for payment had come. They had been briefed; each man knew what was

PARACHUTE
SCHOOL

expected of him and knew the plan that directed them all. They also knew what can go wrong. They knew that a chute can fail to open, a "streamer" they call it. They knew a man can land and break his legs, his back, his neck for that matter. They knew a man can be shot as he floats to earth, or hang in a tree as a helpless target. They knew there is no guarantee that they will be dropped where they expect. They knew for certain that wherever they dropped the enemy will be all around them, waiting, and they can only hope that darkness and surprise will give them that edge of time they need. The moment for thinking and knowing is past; the red warning light has flashed and the jumpmaster gives the command that belongs to them alone: *Stand Up and Hook Up!*

Seventeen men rise and fasten their static lines to the main cable.

"Check your Equipment!"

"Sound off for equipment check!"

"Number ten okay! . . . Number nine okay! . . . The voices count off, above the motor and the noise of the wind.

"Are you ready?"

There is a full, roaring shout.

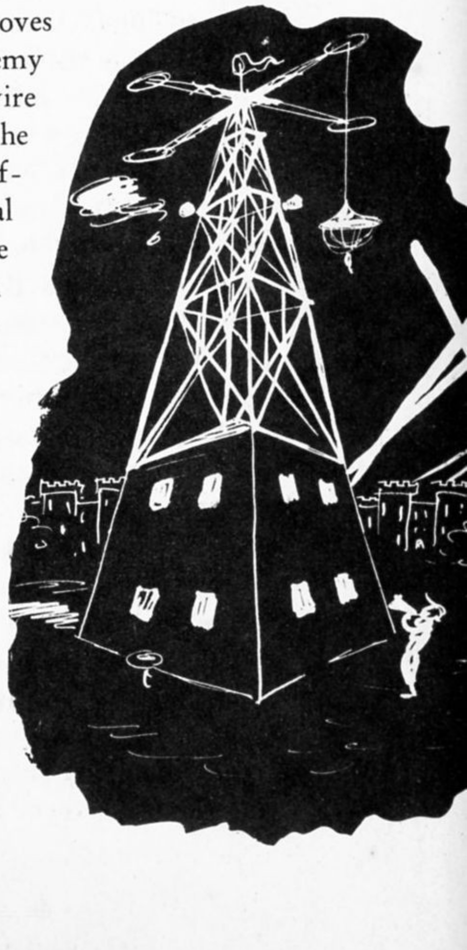
Then the final words: *"Let's go!"*

The officer disappears into the wide loud night; men shuffle fast down the length of the plane; hurry, hurry, the faster you get out the nearer you will be to your buddies when you land; the plane is empty. In seconds which cannot be measured in time, men have descended into battle.

On the night of July 9, 1943, paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division, forming a combat team, under the command of Colonel James M. Gavin, parachuted on to Sicily to spearhead the allied seaborne invasion of that island; it was the first operation of its kind in the annals of the American army. The II Corps Field Order, stating the object of this mission, sounds deceptively simple: "(1) Land during night D-1/D in area North and East of Gela, capture and secure high ground in that area. (2) Disrupt communications and movement of reserves during night. (3) Be attached to First Infantry Division effective H/1 hours on D-Day. (4) Assist First Infantry Division in capturing and securing landing field at Ponte Olivo."

226 C-47's left ten air fields near Kairouan Tunisia that night. The estimated flight time between Kairouan and their intended drop zone in Sicily was three hours and twenty minutes; Malta was a landmark en route. No one saw Malta. A gale wind was blowing; the low-flying planes were blown from their course in the dark; there was no interplane communication; navigation became highly confused; flak added to the disruption and finally the Combat Team some 3,000 strong, was dropped in dribbles over a sixty-five mile area, which was sixty miles more territory than anyone had planned to cover. Furthermore, men were dropped on stone ridges, in olive groves onto and around enemy pillboxes and barbed wire and into the ocean. The Italian radio was so baffled by this dispersal that it announced "five and perhaps ten American paratroop divisions have landed in Sicily."

There began a brief guerilla operation in which forces ranging from six to a few hundred paratroopers of all ranks attacked the enemy where



found as if this incredible dispersion had been the original plan.

Captain Edwin Sayre, a round faced black-haired Texas farmer, and Lt. Col. Arthur Gorham, a 28-year old West Pointer, landed fairly near the planned drop zone; they collected ninety-five other men between them. This force took a fortified position and a wired and mined system of pillboxes, fought off two tank attacks, occupied the high ground north and east of Gela and prevented German reinforcements from using the one road which there led to the American landing beach. Captain Sayre was seen leading his men, with a grenade in one hand, a grenade in his teeth, and his rifle in the other hand; later he seemed to find the old western style best, for he was using two pistols. Lt. Col. Gorham was killed the next day by a direct shell hit, while firing a bazooka at a tank.

At 11:30 a. m. of D-Day, scouts of the First Infantry Division made contact with this miniature task force, and Captain Sayre sent a message to the commanding general of the 82nd, Major General Ridgway, saying that the mission of the combat team was accomplished.The plans called for 3,000 men to do what 95 men, fighting like inspired lunatics, had done.

Meanwhile the combat team commander, Colonel Gavin, had dropped thirty miles from the drop zone, with a force of two officers and three enlisted men. Living on a diet of salt tablets and water, this group worked its way back to the Gela area; en route they found Biazza Ridge, a spur of ground that commanded the juncture of the two American beachheads. This vital terrain was held by a reinforced battalion of the Hermann Goering Division, with another in reserve, and supporting tanks and artillery. From this position, the Germans could split and flank the 1st and 45th Infantry Divisions, who were making the landing.

On July 11th, at ten in the morning, the battle for Biazza Ridge began, with 200 paratroopers supported by three light field guns, storming the hill. During the counterattacks which followed, German tanks rolled to within fifty yards of Colonel Gavin's command post (a shallow, hastily-dug foxhole); troopers were crushed by tanks with their bazookas still in their hands; one NCO and six men dragged a 75mm pack howitzer into the open and fired at point blank range on the nearest German tank. For a while that slowed up the German attack. By four-thirty in the afternoon 45 troopers had been killed and 120 wounded; the remaining handful planned to stay on that dusty hill, among the little olive trees, and fight until they died. Reinforcements of 125 men and a company of tanks arrived; the trooper cheered the tanks an attacked again. During the night they got artillery support and by midnight the ridge and the valley behind it were cleared. One paratrooper was clearly

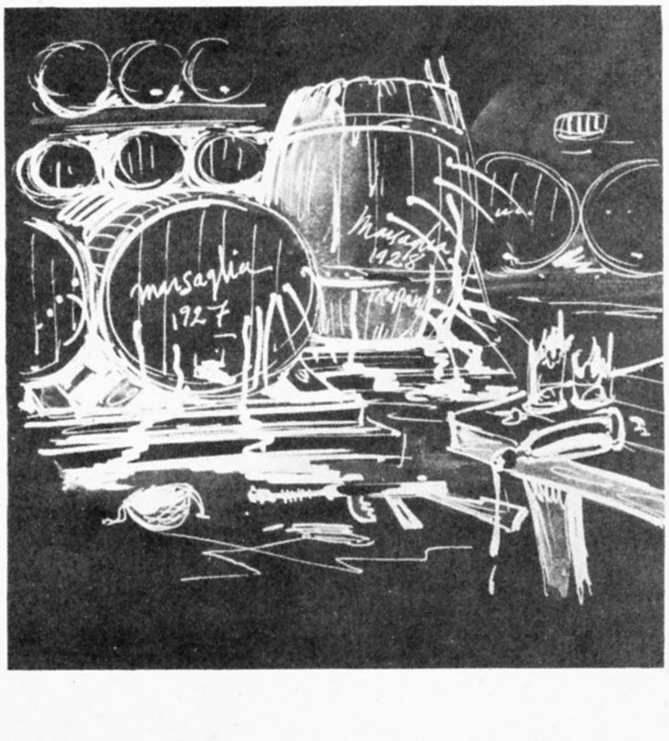
worth five of any other kind of man and that included the other man's artillery and tanks. The official report on Biazza Ridge says, laconically, "After burying the dead on the morning of the 12th, the force proceeded toward Gela."

On D+1, as planned, the 504th Combat Team was flown in to support the scattered 505th. Their arrival in Sicily was one of those disasters which happen in war and are generally passed over in sad and tactful silence. Flying in good weather and good formation, heading directly for their proper drop zones, they were suddenly fired on by one American machine gun. It was what is called friendly fire. This error started all the guns along the coast, also friendly, and the antiaircraft guns on U. S. naval vessels lying offshore. Twenty-three planes were lost, the formations were disrupted, the paratroopers, some already wounded, were dropped as God willed. The enemy could do nothing worse.

The division, having accomplished its assigned mission and several more besides, rounded itself up and marched and fought its way across Sicily; 150 miles in five days and five nights with a bag of 23,191 prisoners. The troopers say that up around Trapani, where their Sicilian campaign ended, the wine was copious and the girls pretty, and they lived in villas for a while and there was swimming and plenty to eat and when you look back on it, they say, good old Sicily, those were the days.

Between the end of the Sicilian campaign and the invasion of Italy, the staff of the 82nd Airborne Division had good reason to go collectively out of their minds. Six airborne missions were ordered by higher headquarters, thoroughly prepared and set up by the staff, and then cancelled. The troops, too, who were being shunted about Sicily and North Africa, had cause to wonder. Of all these missions, the most splendidly E. Phillips Oppenheim was the planned jump on Rome. It had been decided to parachute units of the 82nd on to airfields at Rome, at the moment of the signing of the Italian armistice and the beach landings at Salerno. Then someone highup must have begun to doubt, for Brigadier General Taylor of the 82nd, subsequently CG of the 101st Airborne Division and now commandant of West Point, was sent to Rome to see what really went on.

General Taylor and his companion Colonel Gardiner set out in an Italian corvette and landed at Gaeta, seventy-five miles from Rome. They descended the gangplank, between armed Italian guards, hatless, with rumpled hair and undone ties, acting the part of captured American pilots who had been worked over en route. They reached Rome that night in a sort of florist's van. They were taken to a well-curtained palazzo where the Italians, nervous but full of charm, had prepared a feast and suggested that a good meal, a hot bath and a night's sleep were in order. General Taylor insisted upon seeing General Badoglio at once. Their car was stopped by German sentries before they arrived, in the midst of an allied airraid, to find the General in a dressing gown and a state of grave gloom.



The Italians could guarantee no support for the American paratroopers, there was too much German army around, there wasn't any gas and practically no ammunition; the whole idea would be better abandoned. General Taylor then had to get this word back to headquarters in Africa. The coded messages got delayed and were not acknowledged. He knew the paratroopers were ready to go.

One signal had been prearranged; if General Taylor sent a radio message saying "Operation innocuous," it would mean "this is a deathtrap" and the planes would be halted. The C-47's, filled with paratroopers, were warming up on the airfields of Sicily when the message arrived; the seaborne units had already departed and had to be recalled by a circling plane.

Finally, at the urgent request of General Mark Clark, whose Salerno beachhead was in perilous bad shape, the 505th and the 504th Parachute Infantries dropped just behind the beaches at Salerno; the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment arrived by sea. Of two days, during which two battalions of the 504 fought behind the beaches, though cut off and with no communication amongst themselves, General Clark said this effort was "responsible for saving the beachhead."

The division took Naples which resulted in a great deal of fun for all. They already knew basic Italian, with that dazzling talent for languages that marks G.I.'s in this war; they grew to dread the ten-minute cognac which was currently being bottled in Naples; and there was the Battle of the Orange Garden when the divisional officers, celebrating a prop-blast party, established some sort of world's record for breaking glasses.

Though elements of the Division fought to the Volturno River and others fought their way up into the mountains near Cassino, the real Italian veterans are the 504th Regiment, who spent two months on the flat marshland at Anzio.

Even now, from the air, the Anzio beachhead looks like no other part of Europe; the shell holes almost touch each other, raw and round, full of water. The few remaining trees stand like clawed telegraph poles; there are no towns but only jagged burned out slabs of masonry. It was an old-fashioned war at Anzio, based on the fine example of Ypres and Passchandaele when men sat in wet trenches and foxholes and were pounded to death by artillery. It was not a paratrooper's war but they tried to reform it. Amongst other efforts at improvement, Private Ted Bachenheimer started his one-man intelligence service. Ted spoke German, having been born in Vienna, and at night he would crawl across the lines and attach himself to the end of a German chow line. He entered into amiable conversation, sometimes only for information and sometimes he would bring back prisoners for identification. The same system worked well on enemy foxholes. In this division, for such work, you do not get either promoted or decorated: it is regarded as only normal that a man should think up useful gestures to help the war along.

(Ted was tall and shy, with black curly hair and a sensitive mouth. He disliked war very much, as he disliked all cruelty: he wanted to see it won and then he would go home to his wife, Penny, whom he loved dearly, and he would become a producer of plays.. He was captured and killed the next year, aged twenty-one, in Holland, while behind the enemy lines checking on a telephone

line he had set up so that he could get his information simply by ringing across to the other side.)

In a division made up of amazing characters, one can go on endlessly enumerating them. There was a three man artillery team, the moving spirits behind a battery located near Cisterna, only one hundred yards behind our infantry outposts. These men lived in their flooded foxholes and gunpits for 37 days, and while they cut with shellfire the German resupply road, they received counter battery fire every ten minutes and, as a sort of bonus, special extra shellings of 150-200 rounds. Men were wounded and killed every day in those cold wet mudholes, but the morale was held firm by a kid of 20 called Sergeant McGee, whose life ambition was to go to college, and a middle aged man of 22 called Lieutenant Swope whose only known ambition was to keep the battery firing and stay alive if possible, and an old man of 29 called Captain Morehouse who wanted to study medicine when all this foolishness was over. They were all mild mannered, quiet types and they saw nothing remarkable about their 37-day vigil.

No one who was not there can quite imagine what the war in Italy was like; it was always an orphan sort of war, and as it went on and on, it began to bore and embarrass the world. If it wasn't the flat deadly statement of Anzio, it was fighting up more mountains, always higher, always farther, always colder, with the enemy, well entrenched, waiting as long as possible only to retire to the next range. And everywhere, there was the gnawing menace of mines. The division, wiser and fewer, set sail for England in November 1943, leaving the 504th at Anzio. Two months later, when the 504th left Anzio, a third of the regiment had become casualties on that filthy little strip of land. They were very glad to go.

During the winter of 1944, the division was stationed near Leicester, England. To hear the kids talk of Leicester you would think it was a combination of Venice, Paris and home. For after all, they are mainly kids and they had seen nothing to date except home and a lot of ruins. In Leicester, people spoke almost understandable English and were friendly, clean, and civilized. They gave the girls their glider wings and the parachute wings now decorated with two combat jump stars, and went jitterbugging at the Palais de Danse. They polished their boots until they shone, pressed their baggy pants, set their high peaked caps at the fashionable angle, and strolled the streets: for, in the language of the day, they are very sharp troops and they take the greatest pleasure in this. Some 12,000 of them, experienced soldiers and younger than you would believe, took over that corner of England and the English actually liked it.

There were a certain number of pub fights and a certain amount of resultants disciplinary action. The English accepted this all calmly. If you take very young men and teach them to hold their own lives lightly and to kill, and then ex-

pect them to go out and kill on your behalf, you cannot be indignant in case they raise some hell outside the combat zone.

They were having a wonderful time, but they did not think Leicester was journey's end. They had proved the extraordinary value of an airborne division and the war was a long way from won.

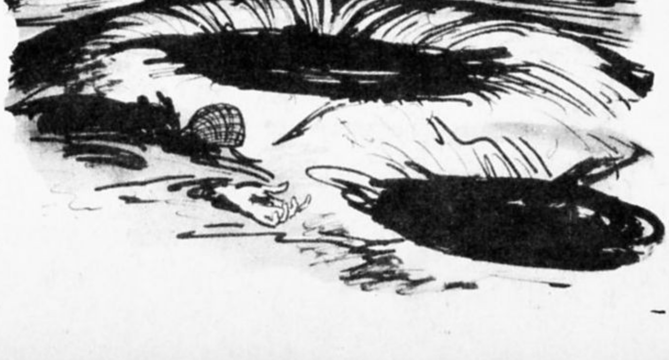
No one was surprised when the sand tables and the maps appeared again, and they were briefed on "Operation Neptune," the invasion of Normandy; and no one was surprised to learn that they would be the first men there.

(There was a moon, that night. The planes mounted and circled, with their wing lights close, and slowly the long sky train straightened out and headed for France. Those who were part of it said it was beautiful: in daylight, the sea, solid with ships, was beautiful too. That giant departure of men for the invasion of Normandy was a terrible and handsome sight.)

By 11 o'clock on the night of June 5th all 378 planes, carrying 6,396 paratroopers, had left the fields of England. This was Task Force A, led as before by James Gavin, now a brigadier general. When his men landed in the fields, orchards, marshes and rivers of the Cherbourg peninsula, the long last battle of the war began. As the planes approached the coast of France, fountains of flak spurted up against them. It takes fine and steady pilots to fly the slow vulnerable transports through that stuff. Some planes were hit and crashed in flames, but most of them made it. Bill Walton reports a fragmentary amazing conversation, in his plane, between men shuffling to the open door. "Please don't shove me, I'll go quickly" . . . "Okay, don't shove me either" . . .

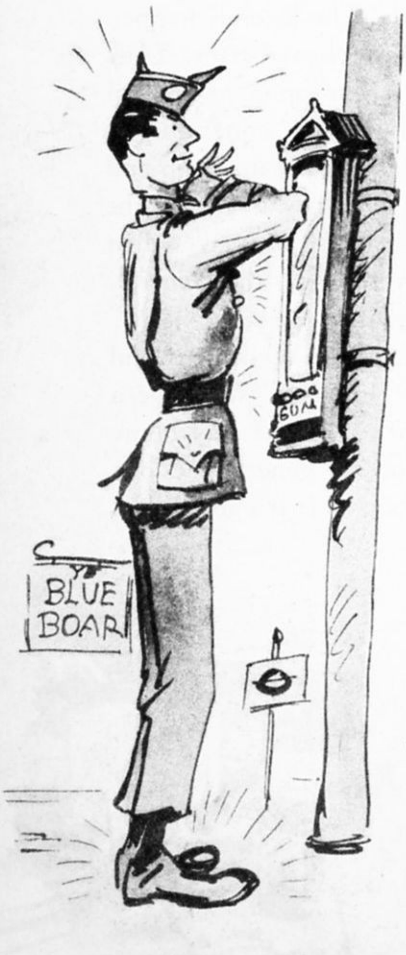
Saint Mere Eglise was the first town in France to be liberated. It was taken at four thirty in the morning of June 6th by elements of Task Force A. The citizens of Saint Mere Eglise were astounded and delighted by this honor. True, some of the paratroopers who had landed right in their village were shot by the Germans while they hung suspended in the trees around the market place; and true, there was heavy firing in the fields outside their town. But they were free; the war evidently was almost over.

In the clear light of noon, the German counterattack hit Saint Mere Eglise. German artillery zeroed in and suddenly the quiet village became a shambles of broken trees and houses, dead cattle, dead people, and the young men who had laughed and accepted their handshakes and their kisses were different men now, silent and fast, doing what they had to do. The villagers hid in ditches in the fields and all around them was the violent woodpecker noise of machine guns, the sudden thud of mortars, and the fast sharp whine of 88's. There were grey German dead, and American boys, flat and empty as the dead are, with blood and dirt on those little flags that had looked so charming sewn to their sleeves. There were burned out German tanks and burned bodies and all the wild waste paper of war that seems to grow from every battlefield. Their town had been liberated and the paratroopers kept it free; everyone paid for that freedom.



During that day, the gliders landed, bringing with them besides much needed men, much needed medical supplies and anti-tank guns and howitzers. The gliders crashed into the hedgerows that lined the too small fields, into houses, barns, churches, and the Germans—who were again organized, after the initial surprise of the night—were ready for them. The medics found themselves landed in marshes where the water was from three to seven feet deep; under shellfire and small arms fire, they ferried their equipment out on life rafts and set up a tent hospital within 2 hours. In an airborne operation, the troops are necessarily surrounded, so the safest place to put a hospital is at the center of the fighting. The hospital was less than a mile from the front, and the front was circular.

There are some simple eye witness accounts of Normany, written by paratroopers of the 508th, a new regiment attached to the 82nd Airborne Division, which was introduced to war in Normandy. Here are two brief heartfelt samples.



Private M. G. Thomas reported: "June 6th was the biggest day of my life. It was D-Day for me and all of the Airborne. I was quite scared but not as much as I had thought I would be. Finally the time came. The jumpmaster said 'Let's go.' Well, everybody started to go when we were hit by ack ack. Half the stick got out easily but the ninth man was hit as he reached the door. We were all knocked down. We got up except for the wounded man who couldn't move. When the last man had left, the wounded trooper got to the door somehow and followed him out. . . . The night was beautiful. I didn't like to see our boys being shot in their chutes, while still in the air. . . . I stayed in a ditch for a while until some troopers came along. We continued to move until daylight when we were boxed in by enemy fire. The Germans spotted us and began firing on the ditch where I was hiding. One of the boys carried a prayer book. He asked us to say a prayer but I told him I didn't know a prayer. All I could say was: 'God, if you could ever do anything for me, please do it now as I need it.' . . . We started out of there and kept moving until we met up with our General. We joined others who were ordered to take a town. We took the town and held out there until the troops reached us from the beach. We had lost some men but the Germans lost three to our one. . . . I hope every general is as much of a man as General Gavin proved he was in combat when he led us in such a victory."

Corporal Jules Stollock writes of a friend: "He was only eighteen. The men in his company used to call Private Tony Vickery the 'Milk Bar Commando' — milk shakes being his strongest and favorite drink. As for women, he didn't have any. His mom, back in Georgia, was his only and best girl. . . . The jump was uneventful except for flak and a few ambitious Jerries on the ground. Out of the entire planeload, he came across one man, and together they started off in the direction of the Drop Zone. On the way they picked up eighteen more troopers and that night they chalked up three machine gun nests and about twenty-five or thirty Jerries. Daylight made it necessary for them to take cover and dig in but Tony stayed on the alert. His vigil was not wasted for not

OPERATION
FRANCE
NORMANDY
TOP SECRET

more than six hundred yards away a skirmish line of German grenadiers broke out of a wooded area and advanced on the trooper's positions. He waited until the Jerries were about fifteen feet away before he squeezed the trigger of his Tommy Gun. The fight lasted about twenty-five minutes and when the smoke cleared away he lay in a heap at the bottom of the ditch. Four slugs from a machine gun pistol got him in the throat. It was a rotten way to die, but if you looked on the other side of the hedgerow you would have seen the bodies of at least thirty-three dead Germans and the kid got every one of them."

If these word pictures seem bald to you, and the language awkward, you must remember that the boys who wrote them probably had not had much time for schooling.

Thirty-three days after the division landed in Normandy, it took ship for its base in England. During those 33 days, without relief or replacements, they engaged five enemy divisions and were credited with destroying the fighting force of the 91st and 265th German infantry divisions. 11,770 men of the 82nd Airborne Division had come to Normandy, by parachute, glider, and landing craft: there were 5,429 men left to make the return trip.

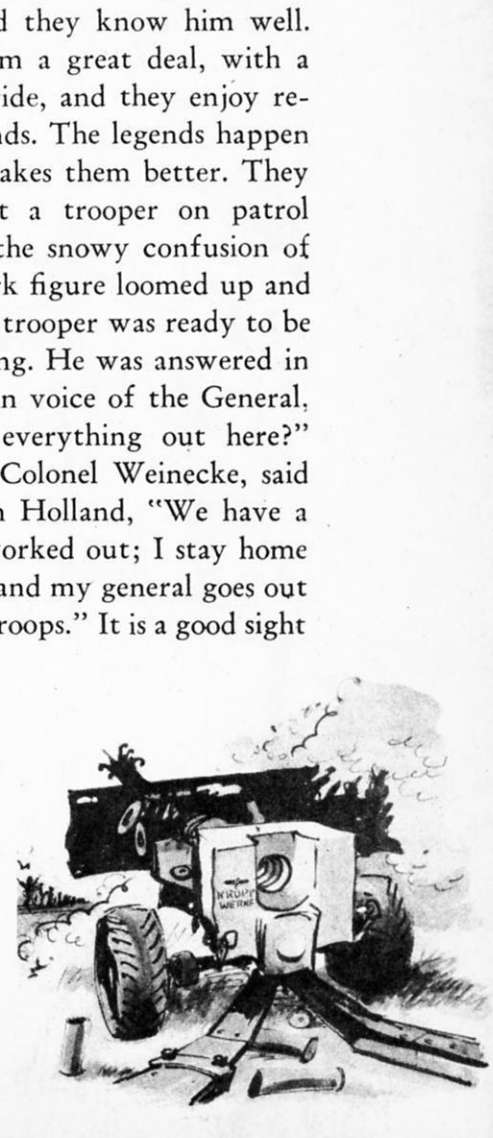
In August, back in England, Major General Matthew Ridgway, who had commanded the 82nd ever since it became an airborne division in 1942, was promoted to the command of the first American Airborne Corps. Brigadier General Gavin was given the division, and the division is truly his. Nothing written about the 82nd would be complete without some account of this man, whom his soldiers always refer to as "Slim Jim" or "General Jim."

James Gavin began his army life at seventeen when he exaggerated his age and enlisted. From the ranks, he got to West Point, where he had always intended going in the first place. At thirty-seven he is the youngest Major General in the U. S. Army; he is also the outstanding student and innovator of airborne warfare.

To his men, he is one of them what they believe to be the best of them. They love him because he always jumps out of the lead plane first; because he is serene and cheerful in combat; because he drives them relentlessly and gets results of which they are fiercely proud; because he has dignity but no pomp, and any man can be sure of his consideration and his justice; and they also love the cocky way he wears his hat, the fact that he is tall and thin and has a charming Irish face, and the way he laughs. He has another quality soldiers admire very much: luck.

They have seen him for a long time now, and everywhere and they know him well. They talk about him a great deal, with a sort of possessive pride, and they enjoy repeating all the legends. The legends happen to be true which makes them better. They will tell you about a trooper on patrol before the lines in the snowy confusion of the Bulge: a tall dark figure loomed up and was challenged; the trooper was ready to be the first man shooting. He was answered in the calm well-known voice of the General, "Hello son, how's everything out here?" The chief of staff, Colonel Weinecke, said rather plaintively in Holland, "We have a wonderful system worked out; I stay home with the telephones and my general goes out and fights with the troops." It is a good sight to see this man with his soldiers; the way they salute him is like shaking hands.

And they also say of him that when he is giving any one



ST MERE EGLISE
12 KM

hell, and that person can barely hear what he is saying, then General Gavin is really angry.

General Gavin, chose a staff which perfectly suited him and his division. The average age of his famous four G's, Colonels Ireland, Norton, Marin and Winton, all formerly field officers in the regiments, is now 28. In this galaxy of brain, beauty and youth, the Chief of Staff, who is all of 41, has a tendency to regard himself as the Rock of Ages.

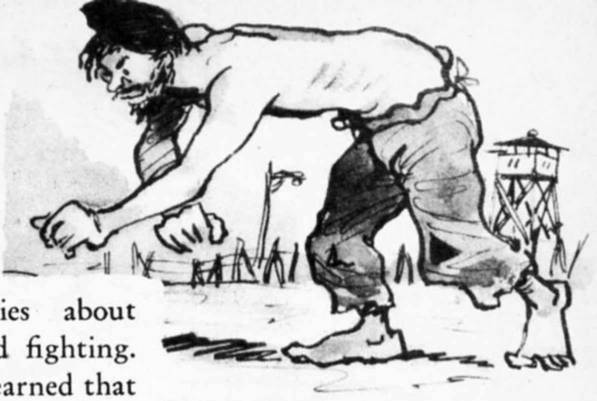
But a division is made by all the officers and men in it. The style and direction may be set from the top, but the performance depends on everyone's quality. In this division there is a sure understanding between the officers and men; perhaps due to the fact hailing that all men are definitely equal when suspended by parachute or in a flimsy glider over enemy territory, and also perhaps due to the fact that there is some common denominator of courage, endurance and straight madness which makes men want to be airborne troops in the first place.

After Normany all the high allied brass was definitely sold on airborne operations. The troops were wonderful, the leadership stupendous, and men falling out of the sky could do anything; whereupon it was decided to send the biggest airborne fleet yet, in daylight, to Holland to flank the Siegfried Line and get to the heart of Germany the quick way.

On September 17, 1944, armada of planes, flying at a fixed altitude; in formation passed for 3 hours over enemy held Holland, while the amazed citizens on the ground below waved and cheered and believed the whole thing was an act of God. The first regiment of the 82nd dropped south of Nijmegen at 1 p. m.; the last regiment dropped at 1:28 p. m. By eight thirty that night, the initial missions of all three regiments had been completed. This is not close to perfect, it is perfect; for by now you realize the hazards involved in an airborne operation.

Three days later, after fighting off 6 major counterattacks, the 82nd held Nijmegen securely and was ready to take the great bridges over the Waal. This was the road for the British Second Army to reach Arnhem, the key point of the whole invasion. The Waal is a very un-European river, being wide, swift and deep, and the road bridge across it is the longest span bridge in Europe and looks like an American job, the Eads bridge across the Mississippi, for example. The British Guards Armored Division arrived in Nijmegen and the battle was on. The men of the 505, to the delight and admiration of the British, fought over rooftops and blasted their way through houses, to take the near end of the Bridge. Meanwhile the 504, in rubber boats borrowed from the British, set out, in day light, with a weak smoke screen to protect them, to paddle across the Waal and assault a high bank on top of which were Germans.

One paratrooper, who made that trip, recalled how they walked across the sandy flat bank of the river to their boats, while



bullets kicked up the dirt around them. He was next to a new man who kept saying "What is that? Say are those bullets, for God's sake?" To which the veteran replied, "You'll find out soon enough, bud."

The end of this battle found paratroopers fighting in the huge steel girders of the bridge, trying to pick off Germans before they could blow themselves and the bridge sky-high. The British tanks were rolling across below them. It is a pity that the movie do not do these things right, for this battle was as sensational as it was photogenic.

As everyone knows, the British Second Army could not get to the superb 1st British Airborne Division at Arnhem in time, and the main object of the invasion failed; but the two American airborne divisions, committed in this action, succeeded entirely, and having succeeded they stayed in Holland to hold the land conquered. This was regarded by the troopers of the 82nd as fairly easy work, all things considered. "Easy" is only a word: in twenty-two days the division hospital handled 2,974 wounded and over 400 major surgical operations were performed.

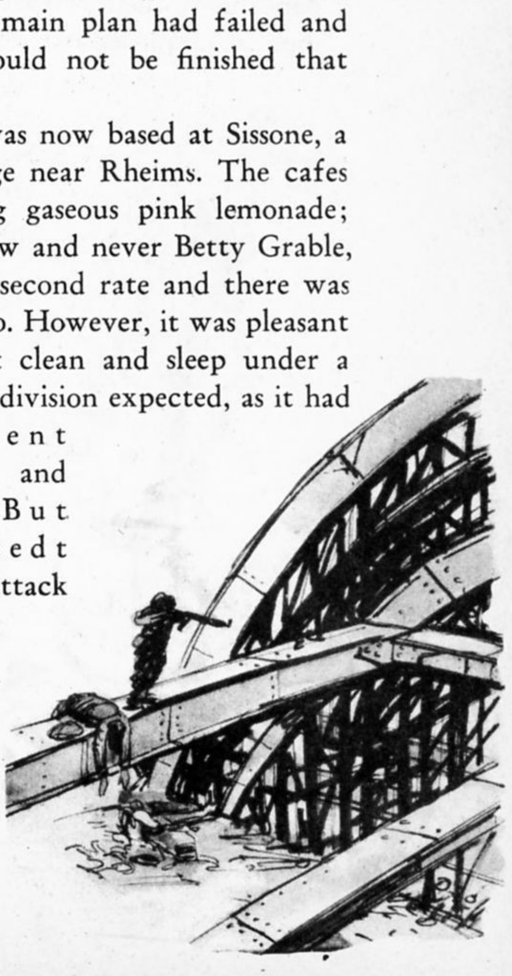
But if the troopers were not engaged in fighting for their lives, they always found ways to amuse themselves.

A dinner party in a half shelled house less than a mile from the German lines, with a sheet for table cloth and marigolds in a broken bottle as ornament and an electrifying assortment of drink; it seemed a good idea to have a dinner party for a change and everyone shaved. Or dated the girls in Nijmegen which was shelled off and on all day and night; or amused themselves helping put out fires started by German artillery. Rode bicycles, played baseball, made interior improvements on their beat-up billets; read comic strip magazines or played cards. Tinkered with liberated cars and motor bikes, and were constantly happily occupied trying to find something to drink, something interesting to eat or a comfortable place to sit and tell each other stories about women and fighting. They had learned that war is long and life is short and the trick is to be as merry as possible.

They were being whittled down every day, and every day they killed more Germans, but the main drive of the war was elsewhere and they hated sitting in one place, with nothing much to show for it. And every day the little city of Nijmegen which they liked and the people of Nijmegen whom they liked and admired, were being pounded by enemy artillery, until the town grew uglier and uglier and the hospitals overflowed with wounded women and children.

When they finally left Holland after 9 weeks of this dismal war, they left behind a neat cemetery with more than 800 graves marked by white crosses; the school children of Nijmegen tend those graves. The division had done its part of the job; it was their sorrow that the main plan had failed and that the war could not be finished that winter.

The division was now based at Sissone, a drab stony village near Rheims. The cafes sold a depressing gaseous pink lemonade; the girls were few and never Betty Grable, the scenery was second rate and there was nothing else to do. However, it was pleasant to relax and get clean and sleep under a whole roof. The division expected, as it had earned, a decent period for rest and reorganization. But Von Rundstedt launched his attack



ALLES VERBOTEN
NICHT !
Kriegesgefang
Hier
Nich

through the Ardennes and on December 17 the division was alerted. It took exactly 12 hours for a division of 12,000 men, complete with equipment, to be in trucks and on the way. The operation following, which has no name, could suitably be called Operation Rescue.

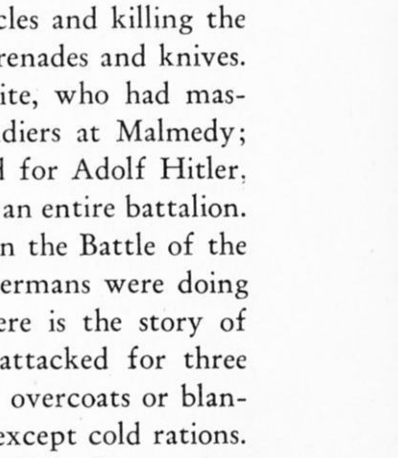
They drove through Bastogne to the Saint Vith area. The division's mission was to establish a corridor and extricate the remnants of four American divisions trapped in the St. Vith pocket. Since it is a natural state for paratroopers to have the enemy all around them and amongst them, the Battle of the Bulge was not a new problem. However, even they were impressed by the chaos that reigned. The fighting was harsh and wearing but the weather was in a class by itself. No one will ever forget that winter (it was only last winter, when you think of it) and the agony of that cold. For those who could move it was bad enough; they only got frozen feet and hands and faces; but for the wounded it was fatal. Men had to be found and taken to shelter at once; otherwise they died. The medics and aid men who had always been wonderful and trusted, now became man's last hope.

It was during the battle of the Bulge that Captain Pete Suer, battalion surgeon in the 505, lost both his legs. He did not recover from his wounds. Pete Suer had invented, as long ago as Sicily, a fantastic method of operating; he would stand on the bumper of his jeep, waving a Red Cross flag, and move out between the lines while both sides continued destroying each other to collect wounded.

Pete Suer was supposed to stay back at battalion aid post. No one knows much about Captain Suer because he was not a talkative man. if he did talk, it was always about the soldiers and some way to help them. In normal life he was a Jewish dentist who lived in Brooklyn; in this life he was the most admired, and decorated medic in his regiment. He had survived four combat jumps and all the long days of war, unarmed, and intent only on saving the lives of men who practically speaking could not be reached.

There are so many stories; how Captain Travelstead of the 325th Glider Infantry, decided to make confusion worse and see what would happen, so he changed the roadsigns before his company outposts; a 100-vehicle German column rolled merrily into the trap and later a German officer, bearing Von Rundstedt's campaign orders, bowled along in a motorcycle sidecar and was captured. How Lt. Colonel John C. H. Lee of the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion with three troopers waded waist deep in a freezing river to blow a bridge which the Germans were using at the time. How a battalion of the 504th attacked German armor of the 1st S. S. Panzer division at Cheneux, by jumping on the vehicles and killing the crews with rifle butts, grenades and knives. These were the Nazi elite, who had massacred the American soldiers at Malmedy; their division was named for Adolf Hitler, and on this day they lost an entire battalion. It was the first victory in the Battle of the Bulge; until then the Germans were doing the destroying. And there is the story of how the 505th counterattacked for three days and nights without overcoats or blankets and nothing to eat except cold rations. At night they could not light fires so they huddled together for warmth, and if they did not move their feet froze.

It was a long battle and a terrible one; after the German drive was stopped, it had to be forced back. By February, the 82nd Airborne Division was racing the 1st division for the Siegfried Line. They had saved the trapped American divisions in the Saint Vith pocket, they had held their long front; and now, with the 325th Glider Infantry spear-



heading, they counterattacked in three feet of snow and drove their way through the Siegfried Line. So at last they could go home.

They returned to Sissone, less some four thousand men. They thawed and rested and began writing those letters soldiers write: "Dear Mom: I am well. We been up in the snow about two months. It sure was cold . . ."

I saw one impressive award of decorations during the war. This was when the division was holding a twenty-five mile front along the Rhine opposite the Ruhr pocket. The award took place on a street in a town near Cologne. It was a short street with mediocre stucco houses lining it, and there were festoons of fallen telephone wire and broken bricks and smashed windows and a few shell holes. Looking at it you felt angry with boredom, wondering why you ever had to see places like this, why there were Germans to live in such stupid ugly houses, why anyone bothered to go on doing anything. The day was like that too, March I think, colorless and belonging to no season of the year.

In the street, at attention, stood six men: their faces were as grey as the street, dirty with beard, so tired that the skin looked hard. There was a smear of dried blood on one man's sleeves; he had probably lifted a wounded comrade. The general stood in front of them, grave and tired too, and a young officer read the citations in a droning voice while nobody listened. There was no one to watch, no music, no flags; just the empty street and the occasional sound of mortar fire from the river, and the men almost swaying with weariness as they stood. Then the general pinned the ribbon of the Silver Star on each man's chest, they shook hands, they saluted. The men's eyes were all far away, as if they did not see or recognize this street, and had other things to look at. They waited a moment, awkwardly, and then turned to go somewhere else, to their billets, anywhere that a man could sleep.

During the war, decorations did not seem to matter so much. They were always nice things to have but the people who counted knew, without needing any colored ribbons as proof. You could tell about men by the way they handled themselves and by all the things they did not say. But now that the war is over, everyone seems to set great store by decorations so for the record, let it be noted that the 82nd Division has not only covered itself with glory but has been given an enormous amount of silk and enameled metal in token thereof.

For gallantry in action, the entire division has been awarded the orange lanyard of the Netherlands Willems Orde, which is the Dutch V. C., and the red and green Belgian Fourragère. The boys look very handsome with these bright cords on both shoulders. There is also a French citation for gallantry in Normandy and all units of the division have at least one Presidential citation. Individually, there are forty-two British decorations, beginning with the coveted DSO; fifty-three French decorations; 14 Russian decorations, which look like crown jewels; 73 Dutch decorations, including the Order of Grand Officer of Orange Nassau, conferred on General Gavin, and never before given to a foreigner or to any person not of royal blood. There are two Congressional Medals of Honor, one Distinguished Service Medal, seventy-nine Distinguished Service Crosses, thirty-two Legion of Merit, 894 Silver Stars, and 2,478 Bronze Stars. No one has bothered to list the purple hearts; 12,604 men have been wounded while fighting with the 82nd Airborne Division in six campaigns.

Aside from one amphibious operation to the east bank of the river, the last spring of the war, was fairly jolly. There were men wounded every day and some killed but in comparison with everything that went before, this was vacation. The warriors of E company of the 325th Glider Infantry set

up their Headquarters in a Cologne candy factory where they lived in childhood's dream amongst bins of almonds, milk chocolate, brown sugar and neatly wrapped hard candies. Then someone located a storehouse where the Germans kept looted cheeses the size of spare tires. Needless to say wine was found too and later Portuguese sardines. Also, no one knows why, black silk top hats began to appear in quantity; Germans seem to own top hats the way other people own radios. And bicycles were discovered. It was no unusual sight, along the river front, to see a paratrooper patrolling on a bicycle wearing a top hat. And there was an outpost on a breakwater in the Rhine, which was manned by some charming glidermen, so one could make sporting trips out there with Lt. Buck Dawson in a kayak. Everyone agreed that if war was no worse than this, people would not mind taking a chance on it.

Also, to its amazement and without previous training, the division found itself guardian and protector of 30,000 hungry homeless Europeans, the slave laborers of Germany. They were further charged with maintaining order in an area of 750 square miles. One would not have expected them to handle this sort of job well, but they did. The displaced person camps were notable because they were run simply on a basis of common sense and humanity, and the tragic inmates started to come alive again, seeing that normal decency still remained in the world.

Then the division moved north to the Elbe, to join the English in the last battle of the war. One regiment ferried across the Elbe to attack, while the rest of the division was still in trains and trucks hurrying to get there. At the very end of the war, your heart and your nerves told you to put your feet down carefully, to walk with all due caution, and to keep your neck well in: for the bloody business was almost over, and having made it so far it would be really wasteful to die now. Everyone felt this, whether admitted or not. The men and the officers, hating each new death, carried on as they always had, with the same momentum and the same directed recklessness. They finished their war very fittingly. An entire German Army, 144,000 men, surrendered to General Gavin and the 82nd Airborne Division.

It was at Ludwigslust that the division met the Russians and launched itself on a beautiful vodka honeymoon. The troopers admired the enormous Russian tanks and the Russians were delighted by the brisk manner in which the troopers spilled out of planes. One gallant officer, wishing to prove to the Russians that American paratroopers were so good they did not even need parachutes, made a perfect jump from a second story window. The Russians evidently thought this was the best thing since Stalingrad.

In due course, the 82nd Airborne Division arrived in Berlin, where it was the occupying force. All traces of combat had been removed and they were the nattiest troops in the ETO. They turned out an honor guard company, decorated in white scarves, gloves,

bandoleers and bootlaces, which drilled like the Rockettes and dazzled visiting dignitaries. Berlin was fun. This was the end of the journey: the troopers meant to enjoy themselves. The fact that Berlin was a huge ruin did not affect them; they had seen plenty of ruins, German-made.

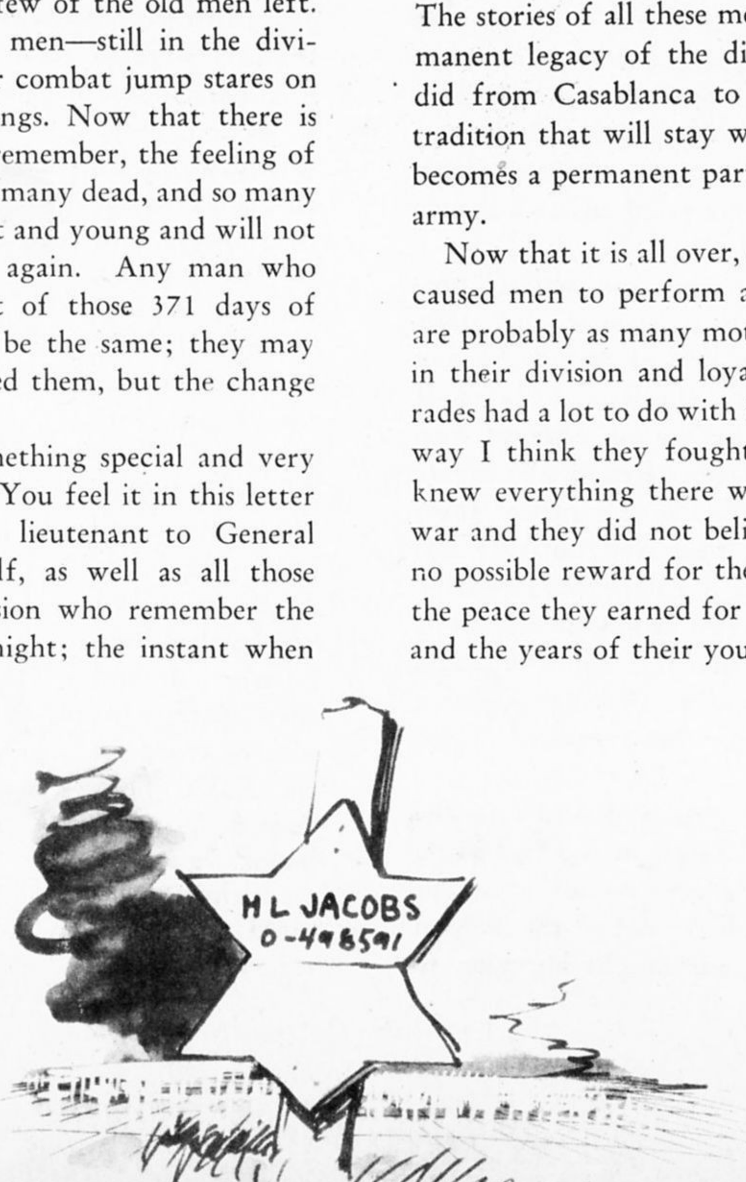
When the division comes home, as it soon will, there will be few of the old men left. There are only 12 men—still in the division who wear four combat jump stares on their parachute wings. Now that there is time to think and remember, the feeling of loneliness begins; so many dead, and so many who started straight and young and will not have whole bodies again. Any man who went through part of those 371 days of combat will never be the same; they may forget what changed them, but the change is there.

There is also something special and very good that remains. You feel it in this letter from a paratroop lieutenant to General Gavin: "For myself, as well as all those others in the Division who remember the roar of planes at night; the instant when the warning light flashes on; and the magnificence of night skies full of swaying chutes, I want to say this: 'We hope, with all our hearts, that there will always be an 82nd. If we can know that somewhere young men will dare the challenge to 'Stand Up and Hook Up.' and know the moment of pride and strength which is its reward, then a part of us will always be alive.'"

You see, they have that. And besides, mixed with everything else, because it could not be avoided or denied, there was much happiness. . . .

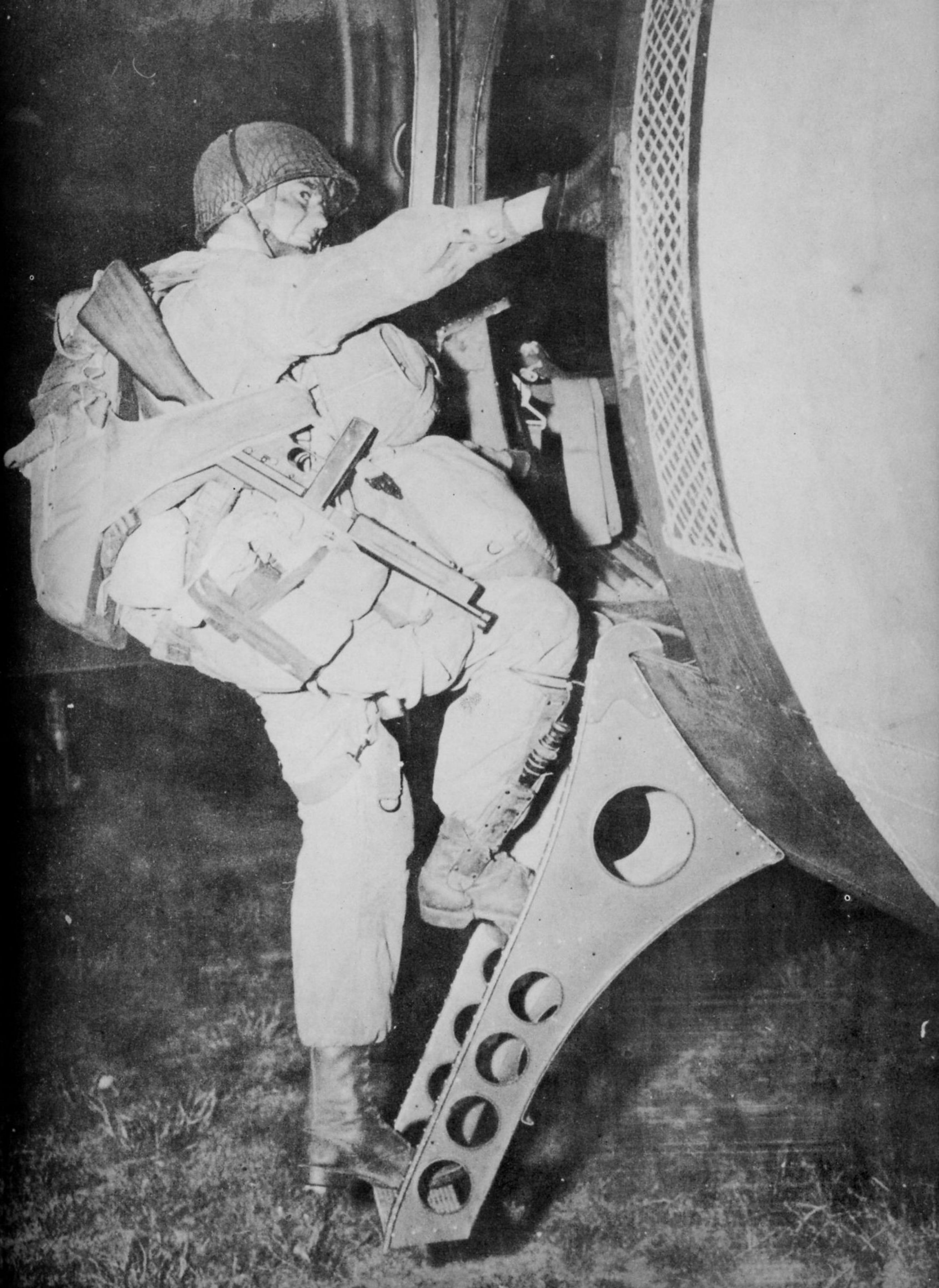
This is not a complete story for it leaves unhonored many men who deserve honor. The stories of all these men will be the permanent legacy of the division; what they did from Casablanca to Berlin makes the tradition that will stay with the 82nd as it becomes a permanent part of the peacetime army.

Now that it is all over, one wonders what caused men to perform as these did: there are probably as many motives as men. Pride in their division and loyalty to their comrades had a lot to do with it, but in a general way I think they fought for peace. They knew everything there was to know about war and they did not believe in it. There is no possible reward for them except to keep the peace they earned for us with their lives and the years of their youth.



Loading for Normandy →

16 AIRBORNE PICTURES



LOADED FOR ACTION

STAND UP AND HOOK UP

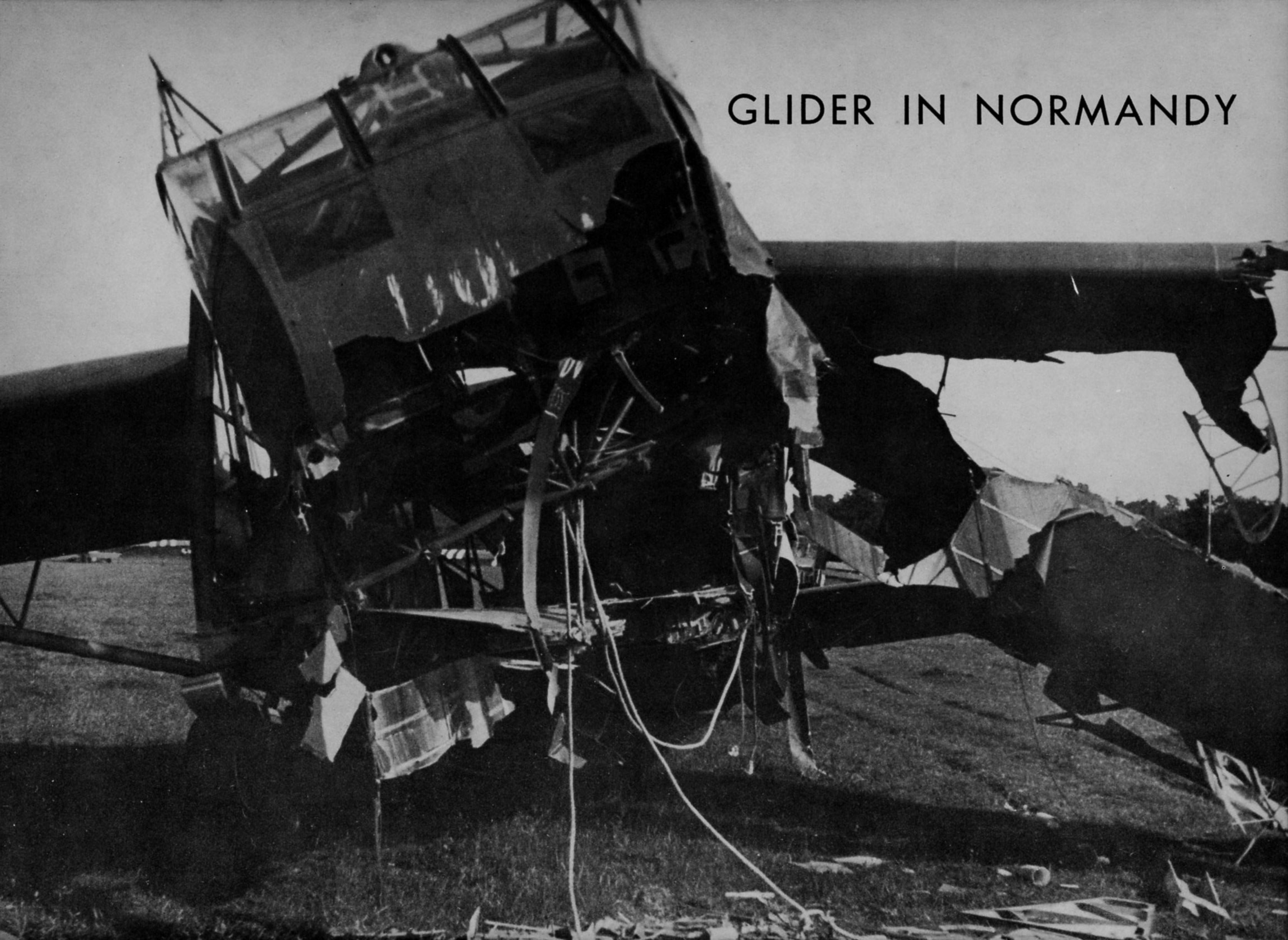
TENSE MOMENT

EARTHWARD BOUND

COMBAT AHEAD

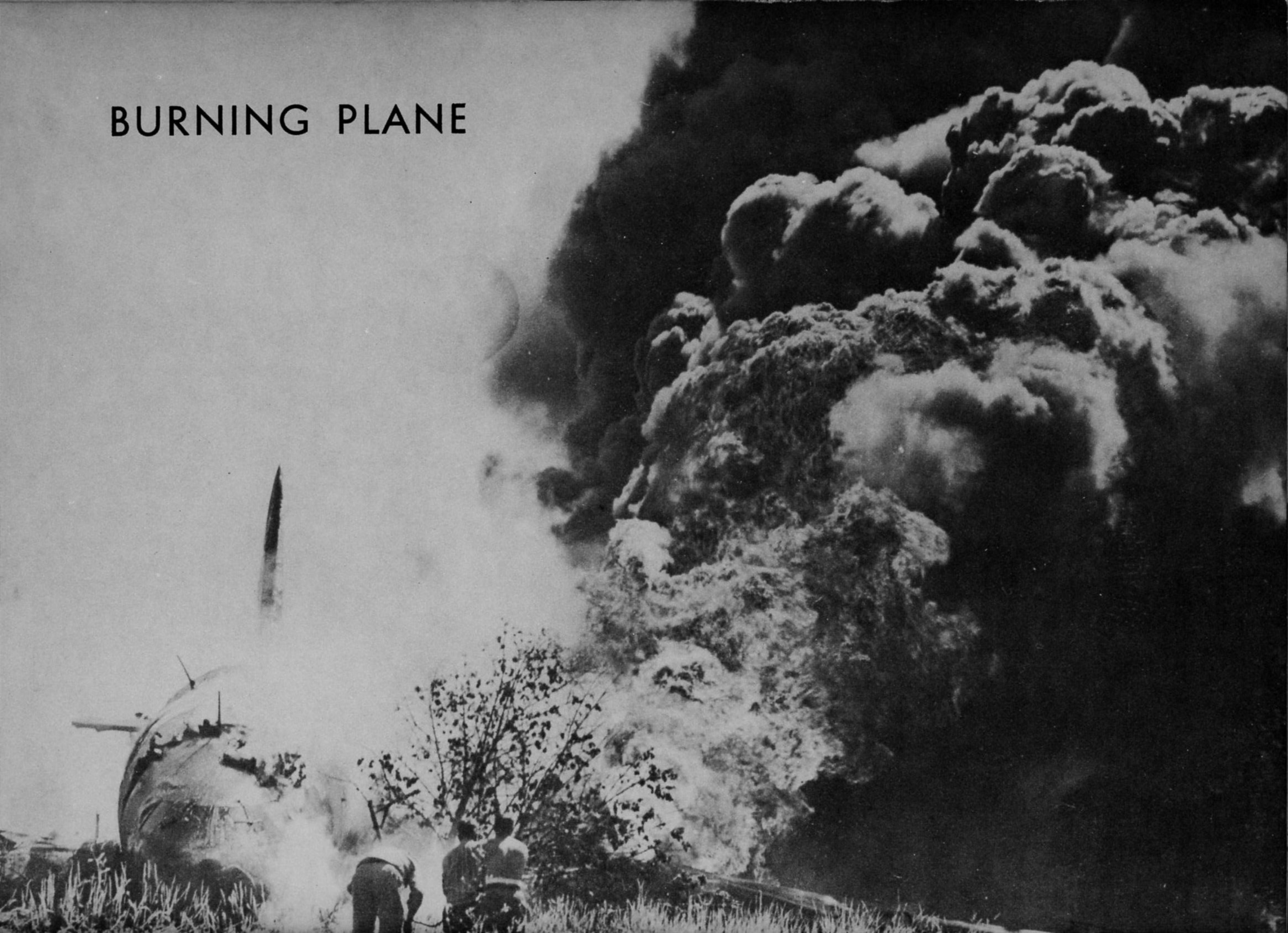
LOADED GLIDER

RED LION CABINET CO.
MAR. 7, 1944



GLIDER IN NORMANDY

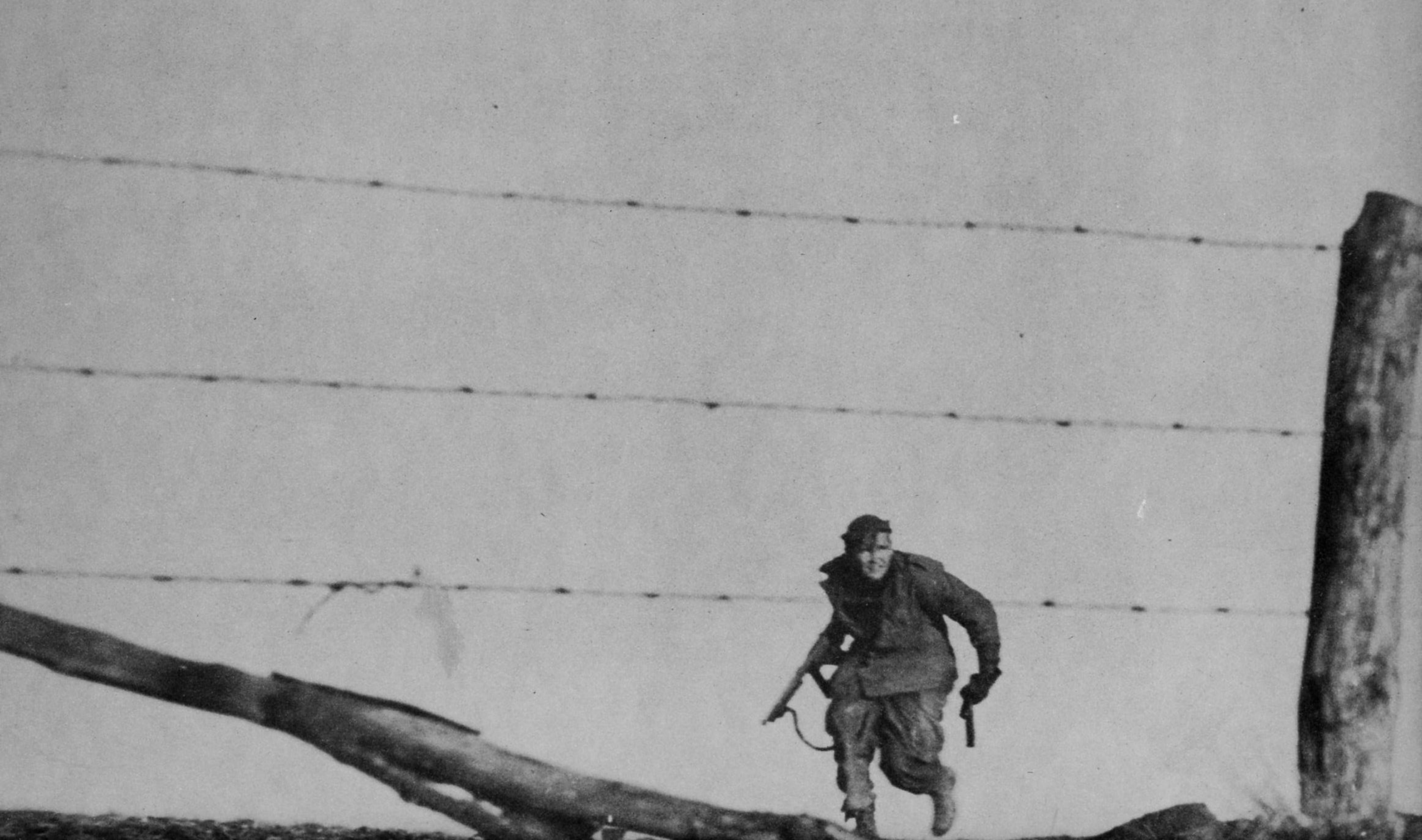
NEAR MISS

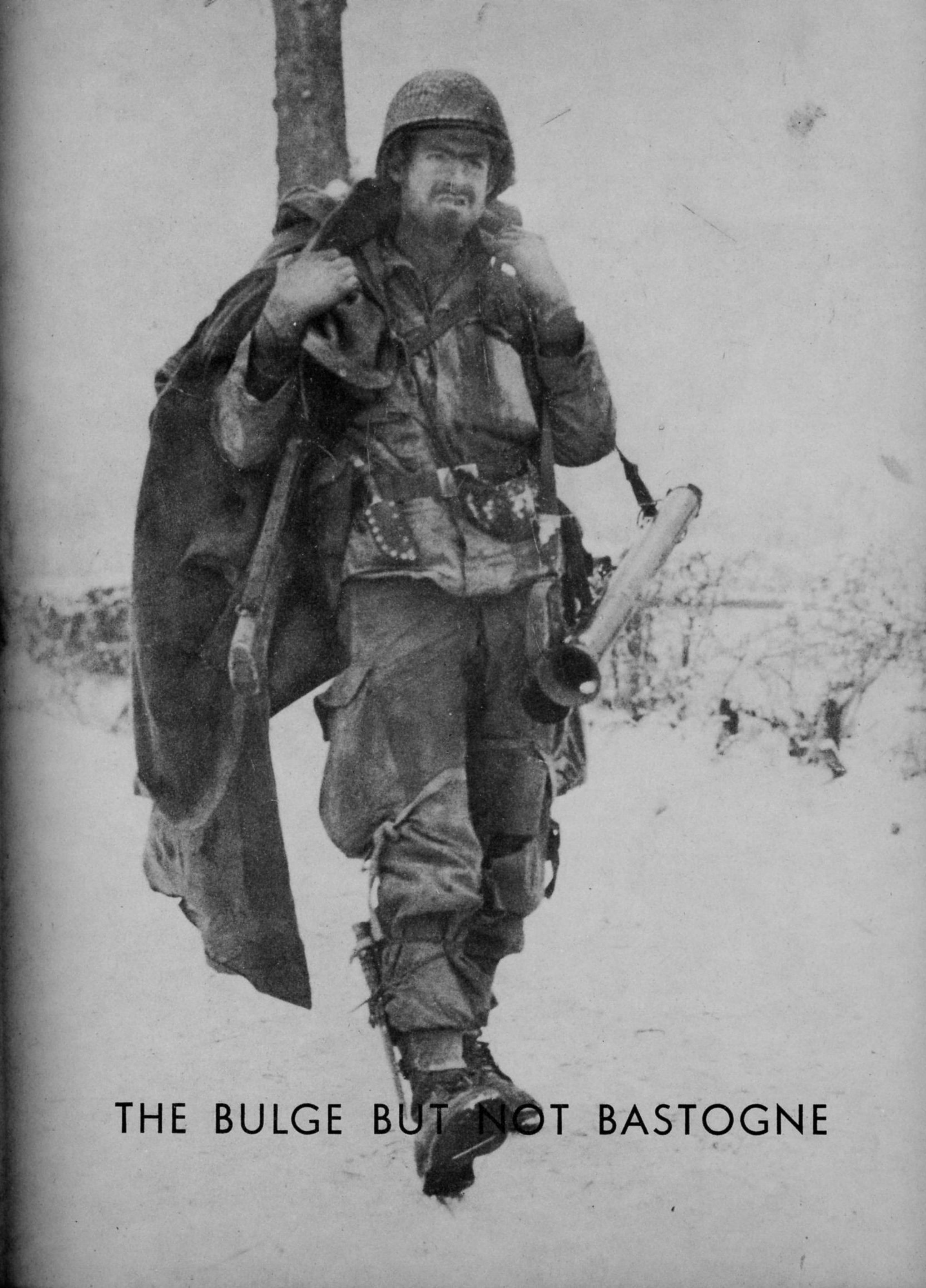


BURNING PLANE

BAZOOKA BAIT

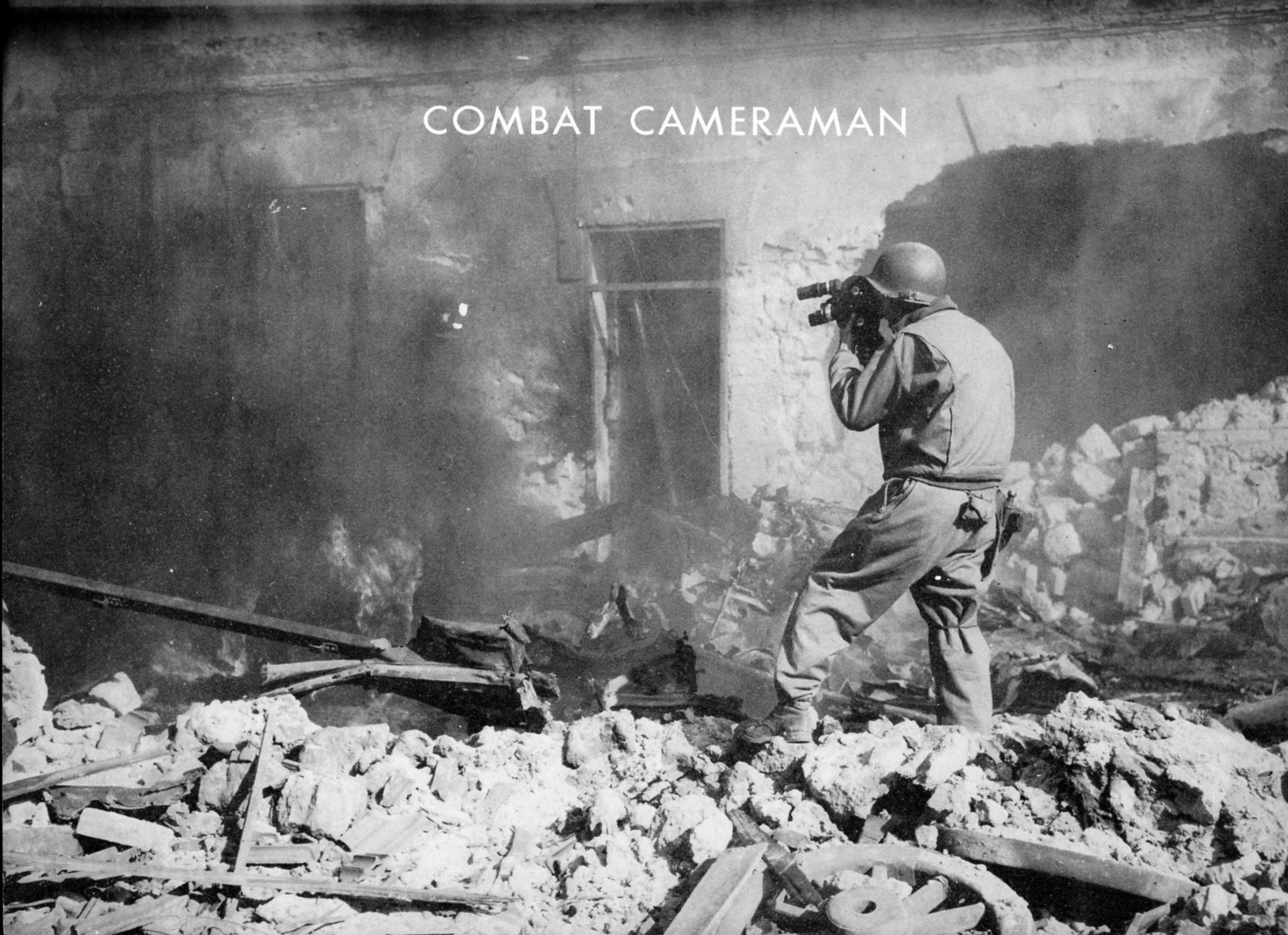
ATTACKING UNDER FIRE—AN 82nd TROOPER





THE BULGE BUT NOT BASTOGNE

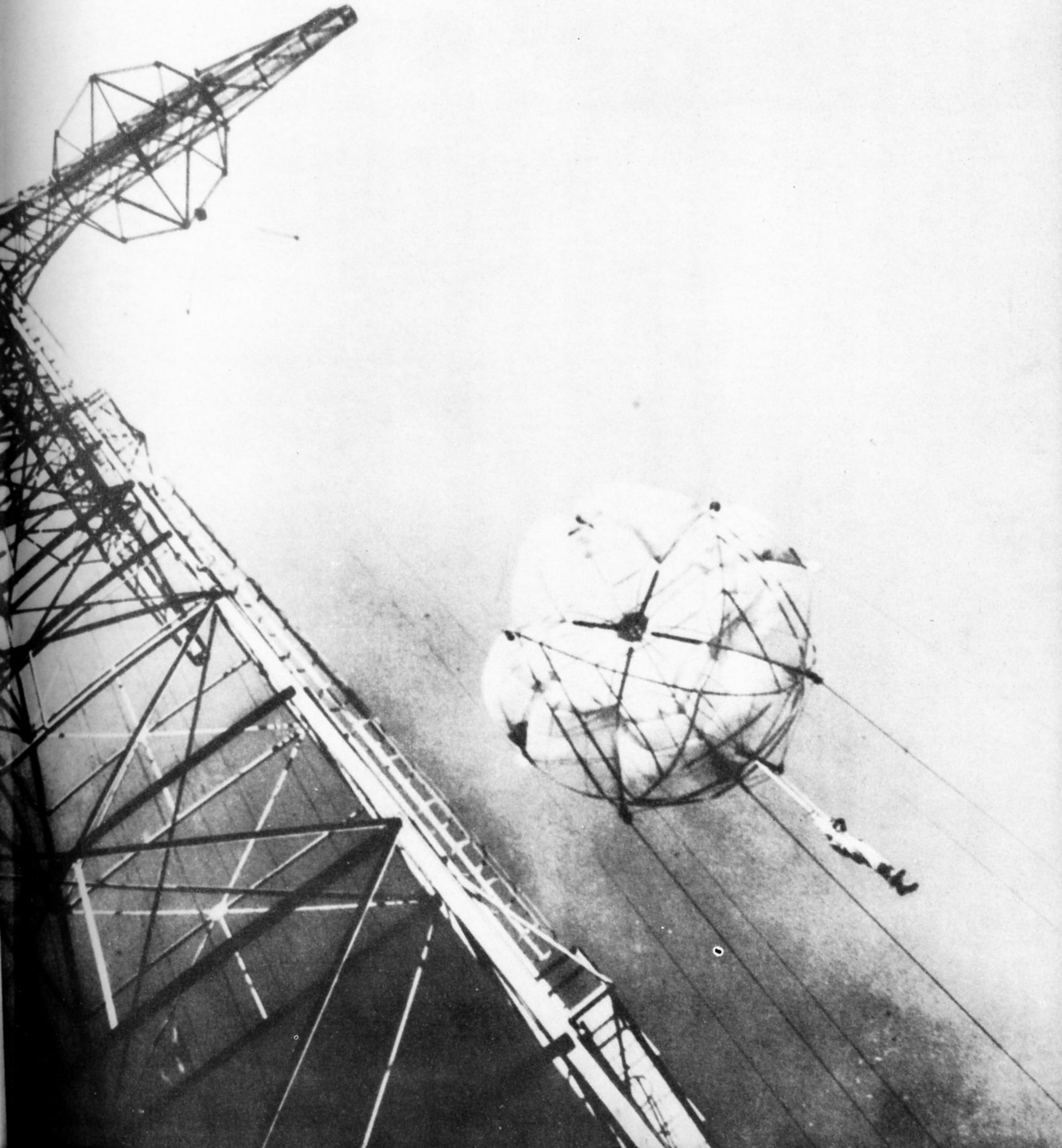
HOME IS WHERE YOU FIND IT



COMBAT CAMERAMAN

CAMP CLAIBORNE
L
FORT
BRAGG
N.C.
TOWN PUMP
100 YARDS
DROP IN
CAMP
EDWARDS
12
DANGER
MANEUVER
AREA 500YD
AHEAD
82 A/B
Grunewald

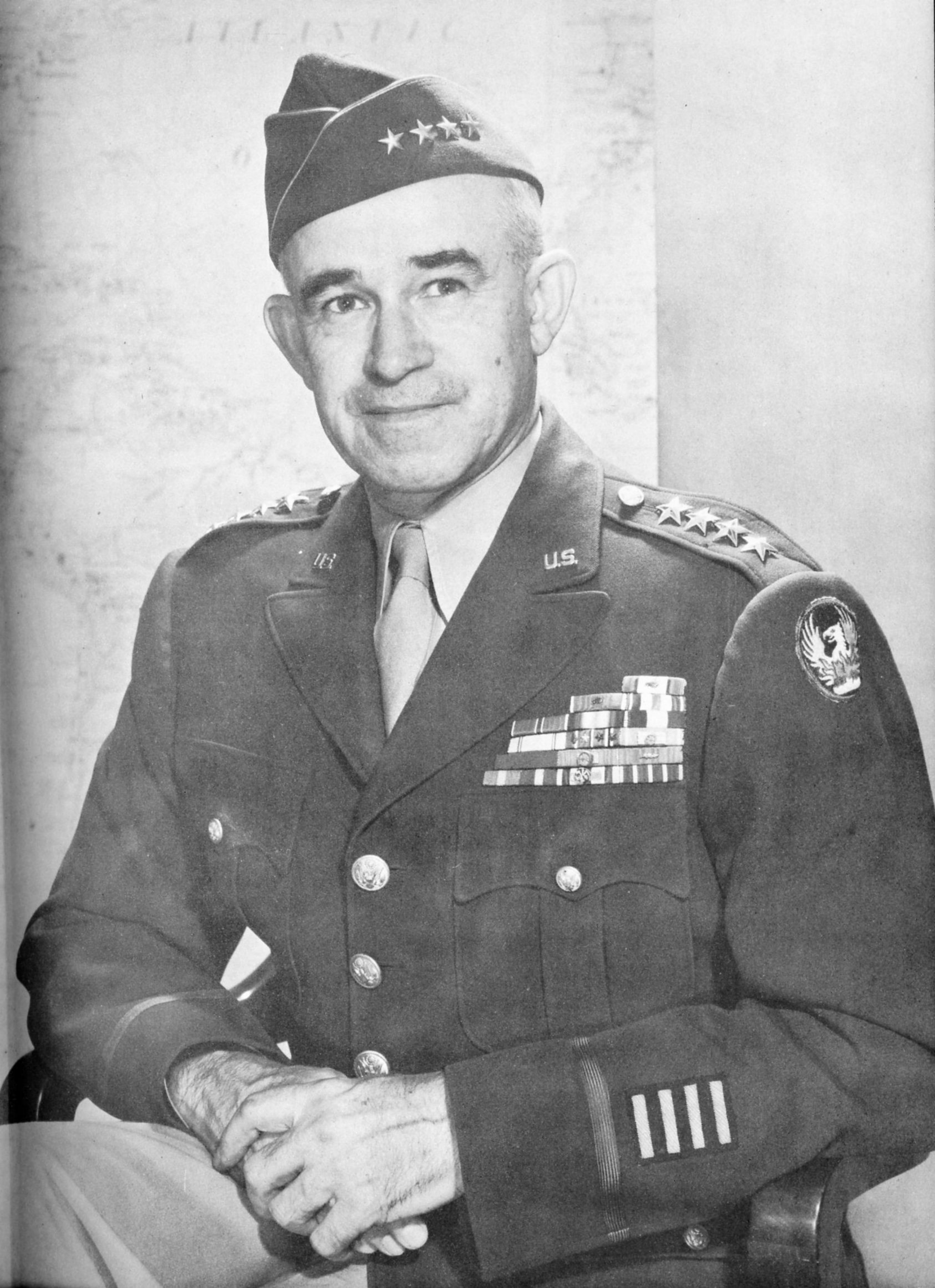
PREPARATION



OMAR N. BRADLEY

82nd DIVISION COMMANDING GENERAL, FEBRUARY-JUNE, 1942

"The splendid esprit of the 82nd Airborne Division from the time of its reactivation in 1942 up to the close of the war made it a command of which to be proud. Its combat record was second to none."



The Growth of a new Idea

By CHARLES W. MASON

Excerpts from the 82nd Under Ridgway

THE THOUGHT of an airborne division was called a fantastic dream in 1940. Only the mad Russian would waste men that way. But the Japs came along with a sneak play and turned Pearl Harbor into an inferno. So the 82nd Infantry Division was reactivated on 25 March 1942 at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, under the command of Major General Omar N. Bradley. The division commenced training under doctrines appropriate for a standard infantry division. Major General Matthew B. Ridgway succeeded to the command on 26 June 1942 and continued the good work of his predecessor.

The airborne idea was gaining more adherents every day. The 82nd, under the wise leadership and skillful handling of its commander soon developed into the most promising among the new units being quickly whipped into shape. On the 15th day of August, what so many thought was just a nasty rumor became stark reality. On that day the 82nd was designated as an Airborne Division and one half its strength was subtracted to form the 101st Airborne Division. Later the 82nd surrendered a full quota of key personnel to cadre the 98th Infantry Division.

The reorganized division consisted of the 325th and 326th Glider Infantry Regiments and the 319th and 320th Glider Field Artillery Battalions. These and normal service units were composed of personnel who had never dreamed of being airborne. The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion were added to the new division and the Engineer battalion was reconstituted with two companies of glider designation and one of parachutists. Special troop units were appropriately changed in strength and organization for airborne operation.

Ground training of the Division continued at Camp Claiborne until 1 October 1942, when the bulk of the unit was moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in the largest airborne troop movement ever attempted in a single operation. At the new station, thousands of new recruits were given basic training and integrated into the glider elements. Advanced ground training in alternation with flight exercises by both troop transport and parachute, and by troop transport and gliders was pushed vigorously.

The sturdy reliable C-47 was doing a wonderful job for the paratroopers. But productions lines had not gotten themselves into high gear to turn out bug-proof gliders fast enough. This made necessary a further change in the organization of the division if it were to be made ready for early overseas shipment. On 12 February 1943, the 326th Glider Infantry Regiment was with-

drawn from the Division and replaced by the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. To balance this change and permit organization of regimental combat teams, Company "B" of the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion was converted from glider to parachute status. The 456th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion was added for the same reason.

The rapid and outstanding progress in training under the guidance of Major General Ridgway had brought the Division to a high standard of proficiency. Scheduled maneuvers were cancelled and secret preparations were made for the overseas movement of the Division. On 20 April 1943, with every insignia and mark of identification (even jump boots and suits) carefully obliberated or hidden, the Division commenced the movement from Fort Bragg to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, to stage for overseas shipment.

The cocky troopers underwent a great ordeal during this period. They were obliged to pretend that they were just ordinary doughboys and be on good behavior and be ignorant of the number of their units. It was tough going but it only lasted seven days. The interlude at Camp Edwards ended 27 April.

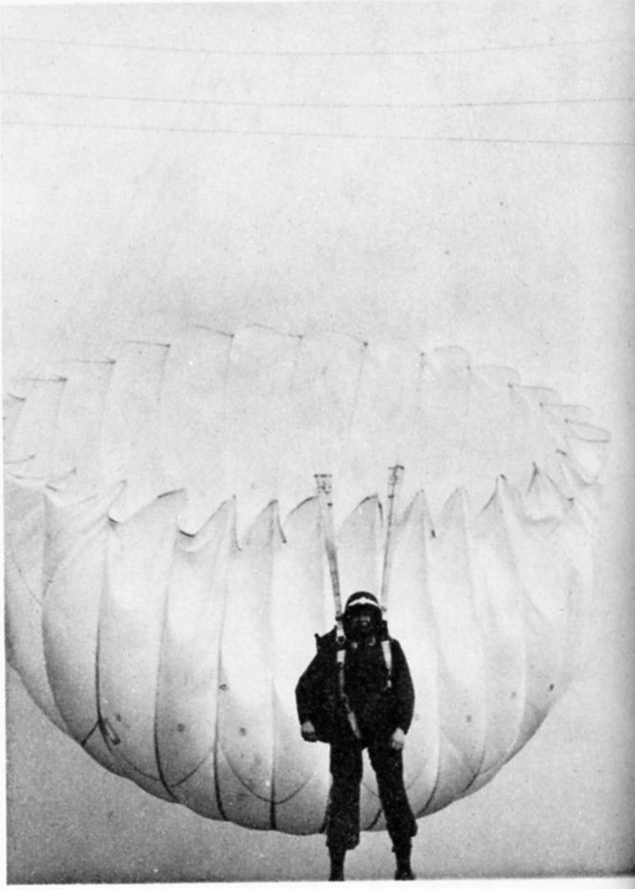
Troop moved into trains. Trains moved somewhere — many actually never knew where they went except that they passed the suburbs of New York City and went underground and emerged at one of the port installations. They had to carry their heavy barracks bags an ungodly distance to the pier. There, military officials in the know gazed at the first airborne troopers they had ever seen. There was interest in their eyes and perhaps a little awe and respect in their thoughts. Red Cross girls tucked chocolate bars into pockets and handed the men paper cups of hot coffee and as many doughnuts as they could conveniently carry.

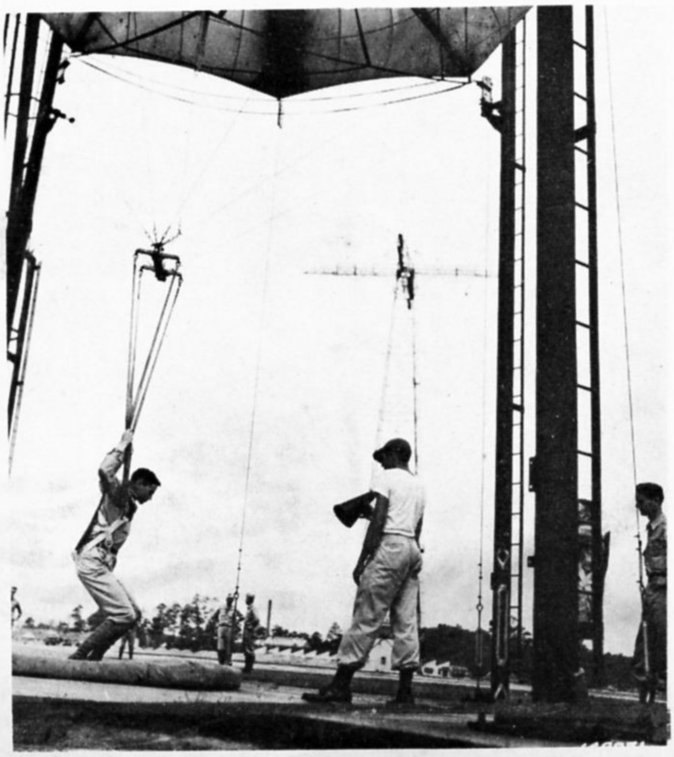
Then up the gangplanks and into the crowded troop section. Bags were stowed away and rumors were re-hashed with new variations. Some discovered they had to sleep on deck and take turns later in the bunks. Early on the morning of 29 April 1943, the transports moved out of the harbor. Division CP was on the U. S. Transport "George Washington." Men were absorbed with concern over meals and police of quarters, entertainment and study and worries about submarines. There were two meals a day, not particularly tasty, and you had to stand up to eat them. There were French lessons over the Public Address system and guessers opined that North Africa was their destination.

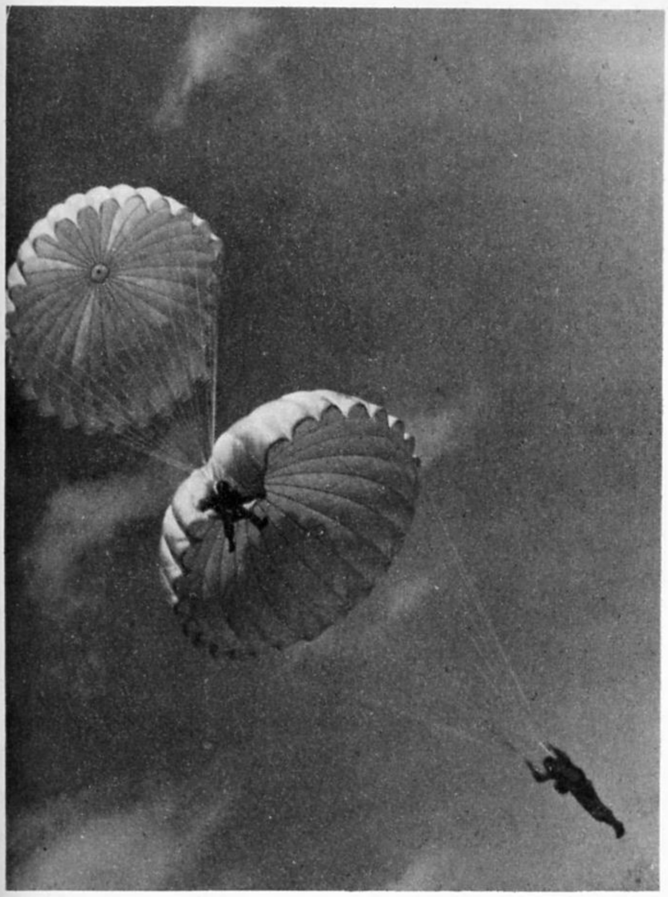
There occasional submarine alerts, innumerable boat drills and exercise in climbing the boarding nets. There were the interminable vistas of the ocean to ponder, and the intricate maneuvers of the convoys to watch. There were inexhaustible supplies of "cokes," cookies and candies in the PX for in-between snacks. All in all, there was plenty to occupy the troopers when "Charley Noble" wasn't smoking. And the days passed too quickly.

The 82nd generals try everything. Omar Bradley and Matthew Ridgway take the obstacles at Camp Clairborne, La.

JUMP SCHOOL







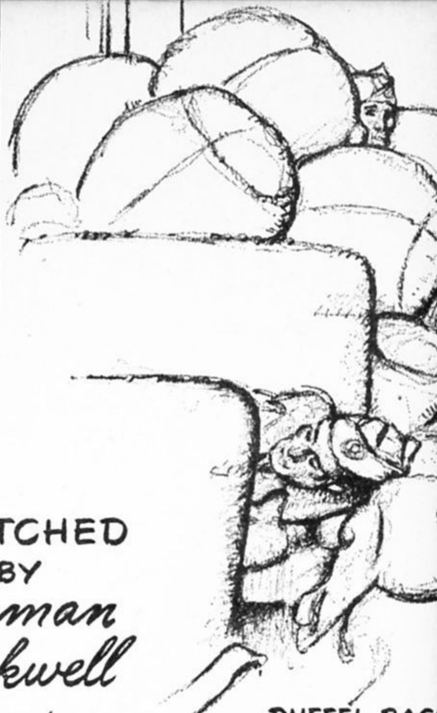
THE WIDE BLUE YONDER

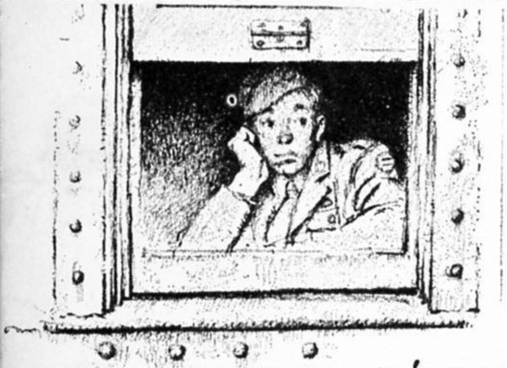
A NIGHT ON A TROOP TRAIN

WITH THE PARATROOPERS

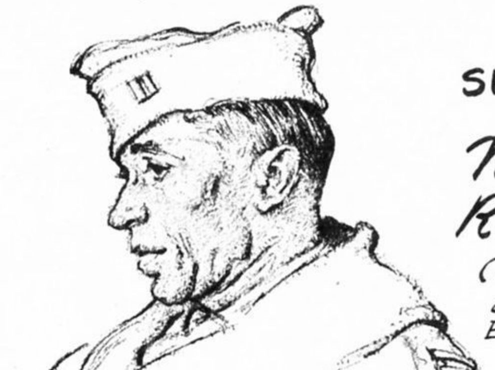
FORT BENNING TO —— ?

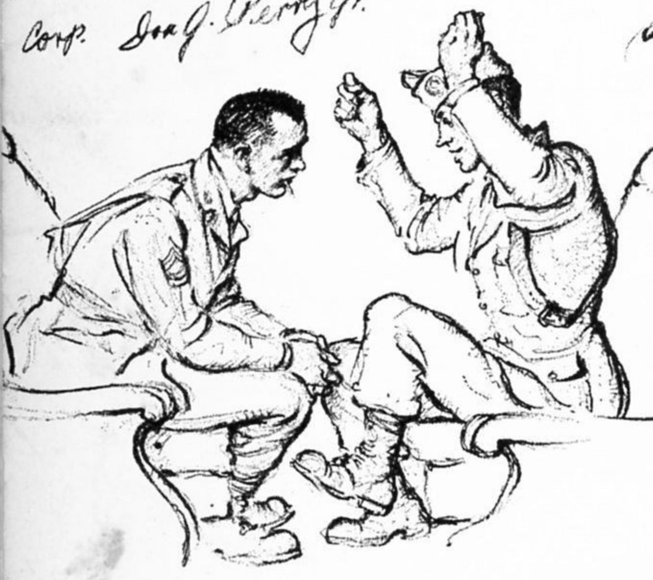
SKETCHED BY *Norman Rockwell*
(By courteousy of The Saturday Evening Post)

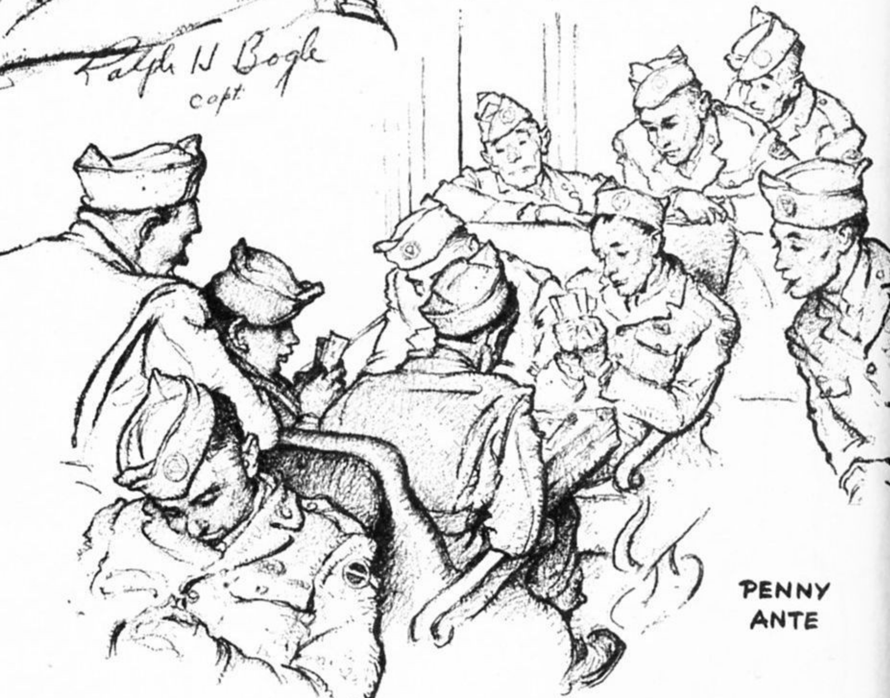

DUFFEL BAG
PILED ON REAR S

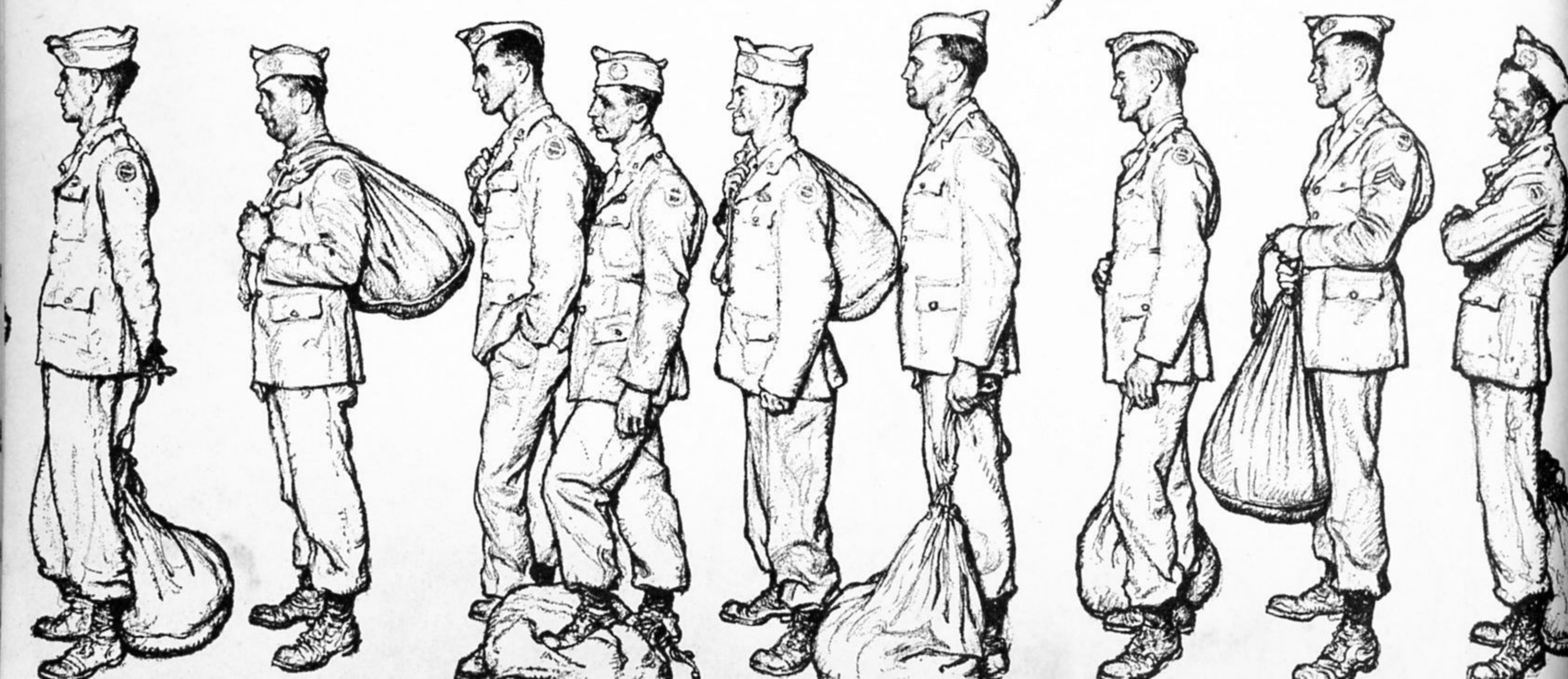

HE'S PASSING HIS HOME TOWN

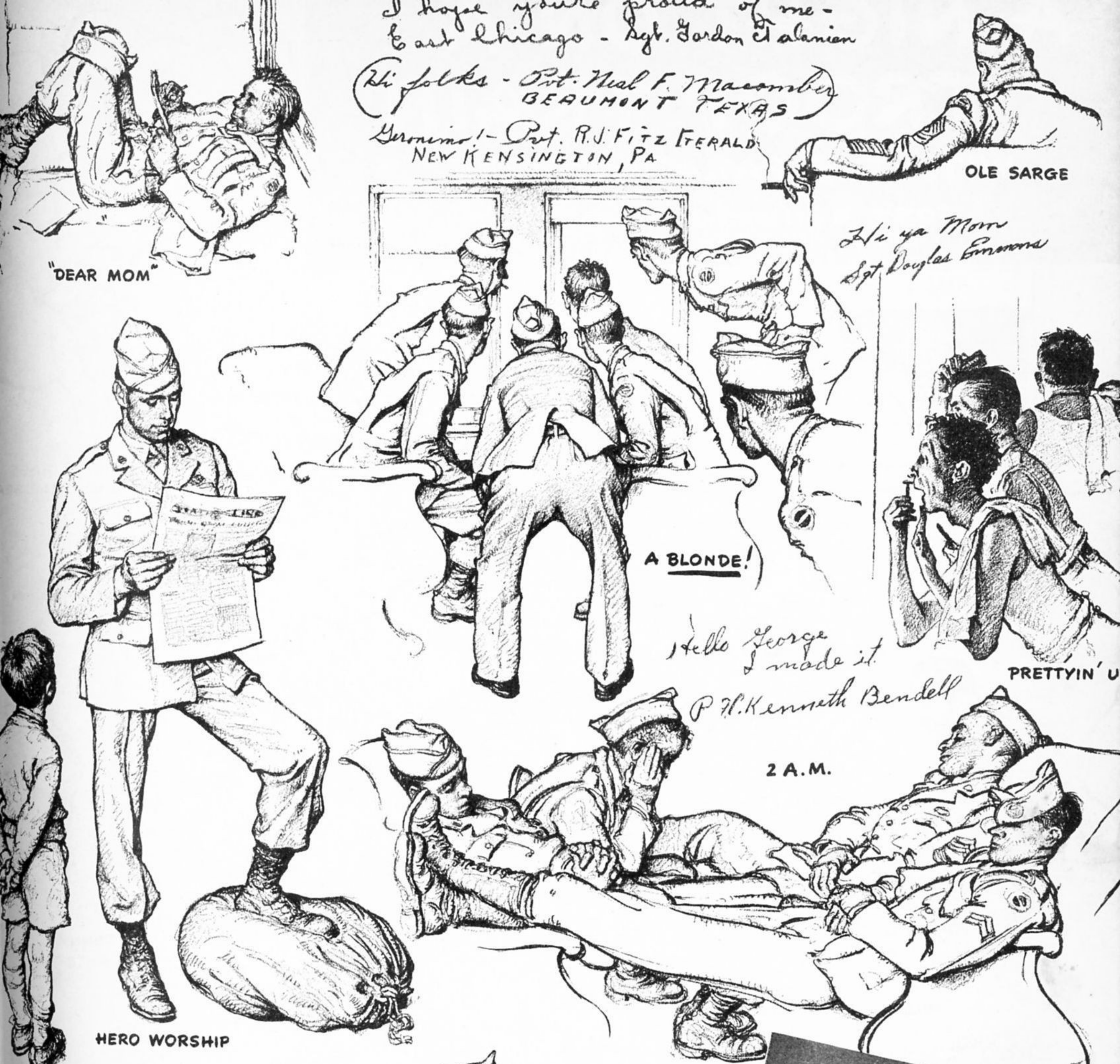
Hello Sis
Corp. Joe J. Perry Jr.


Ralph H Bogle
capt.


TELLING ABOUT HIS FIRST JUMP


PENNY ANTE





I hope you're proud of me -
East Chicago - Sgt. Gordon Talanian

Hi folks - Pvt. Neal F. Macomber
BEAUMONT TEXAS

Geronimo! - Pvt. R.J. Fitz Gerald
NEW KENSINGTON, PA

"DEAR MOM"

OLE SARGE

Hi ya Mom
Sgt Douglas Emmons

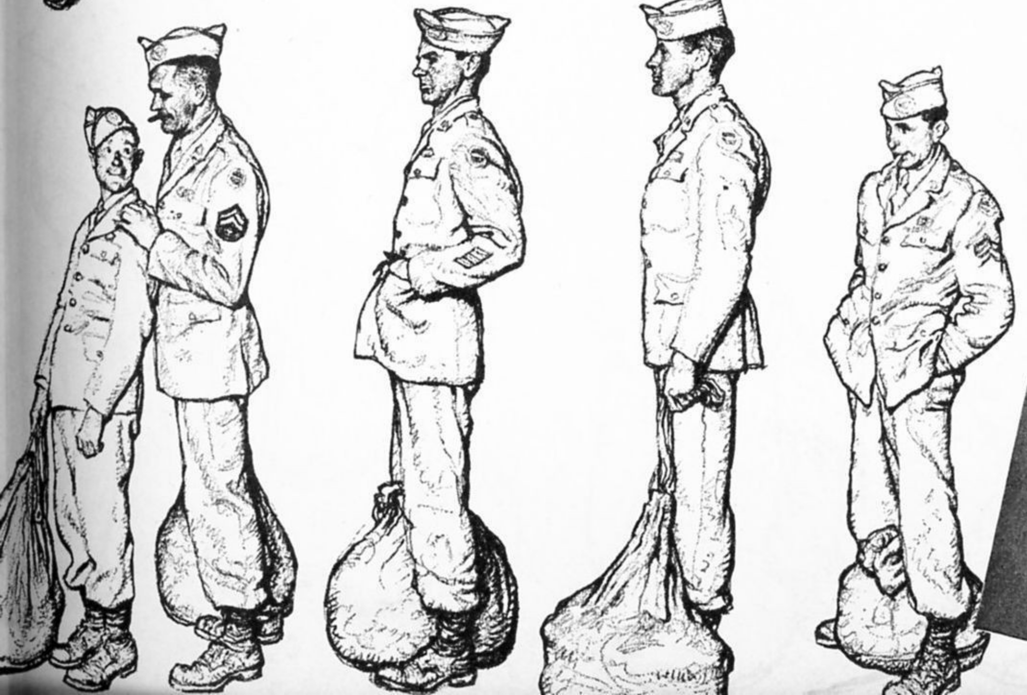
A **BLONDE**!

PRETTYIN' U

Hello George
I made it.
Pfc. Kenneth Bendell

2 A.M.

HERO WORSHIP



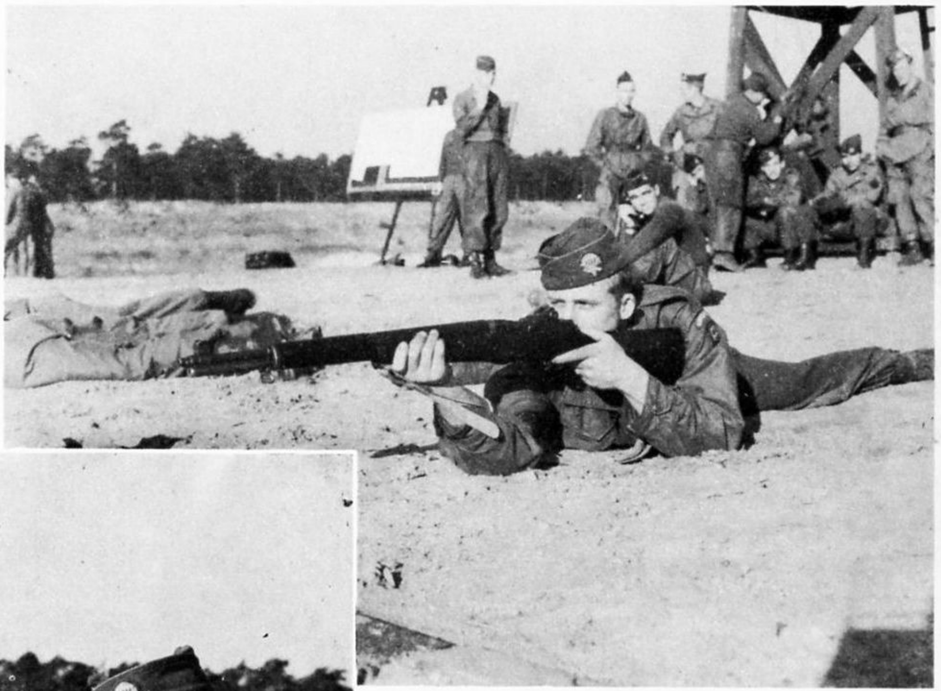
For good reasons, Army censors have refused to allow photographers aboard troop trains. The Post has no desire to disclose military secrets, but it does feel that a candid portrait of the young heroes who are starting on the last lap to battle fronts should be a part of the permanent record of this war. Here artist Norman Rockwell does that job. With the warm feeling for human beings that distinguishes his craftsmanship, he pictures a troop train for you as perhaps no camera could.

—*The Editors.*

325

"Training is continuous"

—RIDGWAY



82nd Generals

A Study in Commanders

Combat Div. Commanders—Airborne
Artillery General Swing took over the 11th Abn
Ridgway kept the 82nd through Normandy
Asst. Div. Commander Miley moved on to command 17th

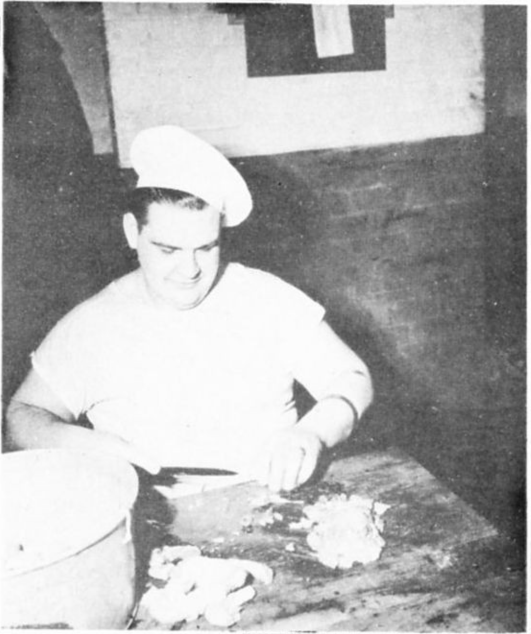
Kierans receives his star. Col. Eaton, Brigadier Kierans and Maj. Gen. Ridgway. Eaton became Chief of Staff and a general in the 18th Abn. Corps and Ridgway became 18th Corps Commander. Kierans was shot down over Sicily in the tragic 504 incident. He was the first Airborne general officer to give his life on the field of battle.

Chief of Staff and Artillery General Taylor left the 82nd after Italy to command the 101st Airborne throughout Western Europe.

Airborne Generals do what they ask their men to do (sometimes). Maxwell D. Taylor chops wood for exercise at Ft. Bragg.

THE COOKS EAT, ANYWAY!

RATIONING?

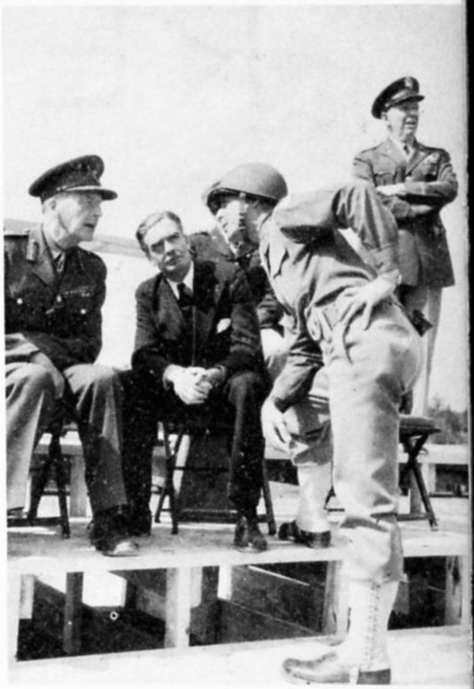


MESS HALL?

DOES IT LOOK GOOD?

WELL!
WHO COOKED IT?

REVIEW by MARSHALL and EDEN



"The aggressive fighting of the 82nd Airborne Division throughout the war, from Sicily onward, was an inspiration to all fighting men. From my first review of the Division at Fort Bragg, I was convinced of its high quality, and not surprised by the desperate valor displayed by its men at critical moments on numerous battlefields."

C. G. MARSHALL
GEN., U. S. ARMY

OUR LAST WOMEN IN 2½ YEARS

EXCEPT FOR AFRICA, SICILY, ITALY, IRELAND
ENGLAND, FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, GERMANY

AA
AA
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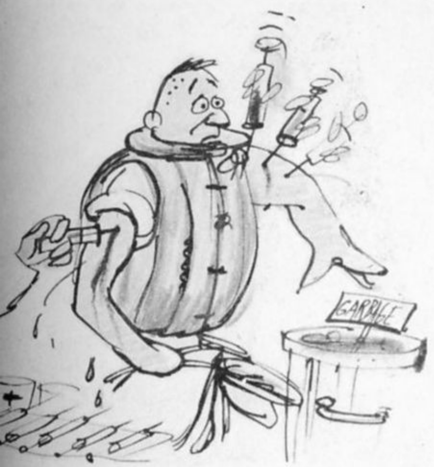
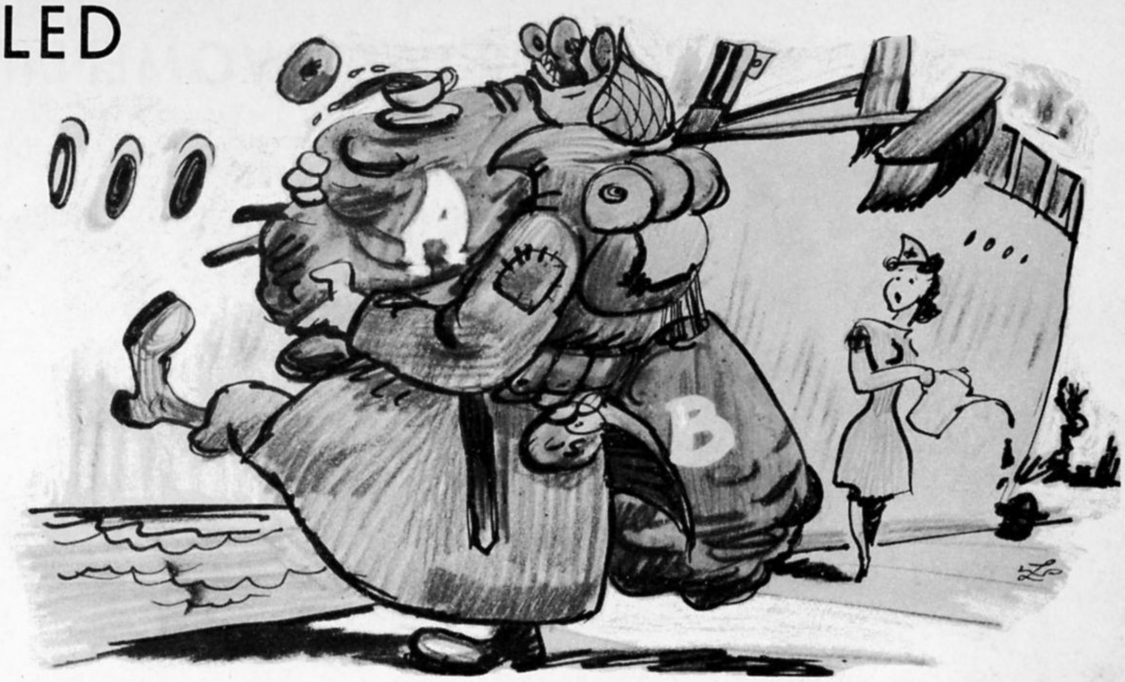
ANCE

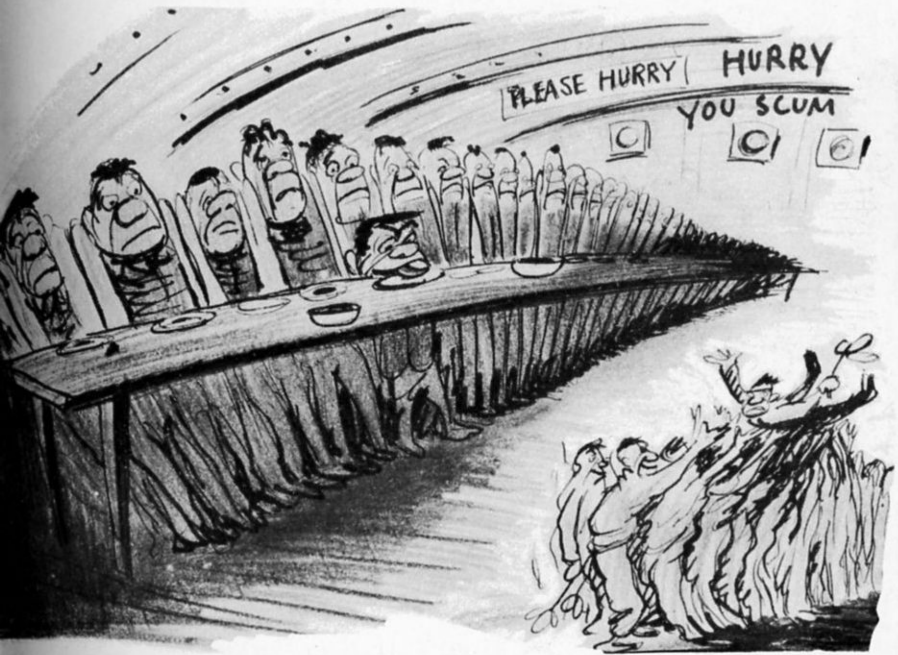
SO WE SAILED



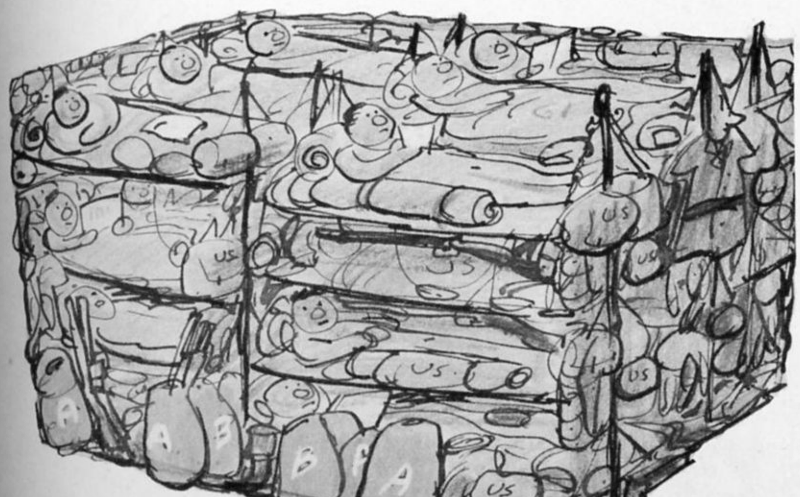
We were shot for everything



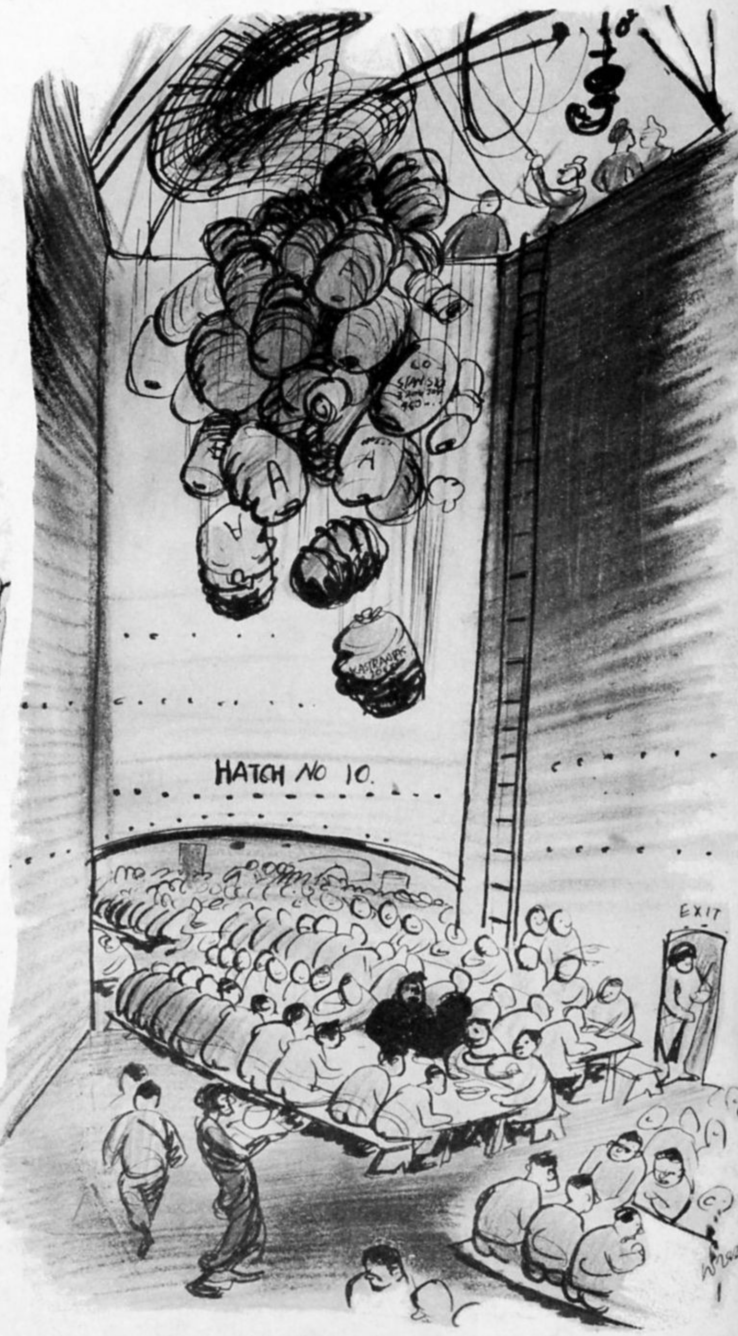
Red Cross Girls with doughnuts were abundant.


PLEASE HURRY
HURRY YOU SCUM

Always room for one more.



Cabin Room


A
HATCH NO 10.
EXIT

Say don't look now but you remember what happened to C. Co.

AFRICA

AFRICA

PROLOGUE TO COMBAT

AMID THE cresendo of falling anchor chains the convoy nestled to a stop in Casablanca harbor after twelve days on the high seas of the North Atlantic. The men of the 82nd "All American" Airborne Division with their sea legs and airborne backs lined the rails and packed the port-holes for their first look at a country which had seen the war, a war which they were to be a key figure in for two years. Between them and the shore, still half above water, was a blownup French cruiser, remaining as a relic of the fight which had flattened the water front and littered the port only a short time before.

It was so quiet and peaceful that the war seemed thousands of miles away, yet it was actually only two months and four flight hours from this very spot.

All eyes focused on the scene before them. It was early morning, and in the bright sunlight, the low white buildings (casa blancas), sloping upward into the hills from the water front stood out in glaring clearness against the rolling plains of rock and sand, and the backdrop of cloudless blue as far as the eye could see.

Casablanca, city of contrasts where, Kipling notwithstanding, East and West, do meet in a city of strange and exciting contrasts.

Casablanca, where, in November of 1942, American troops began their assault on Axis Africa, the first leg of the long road to Rome and Berlin. Where General Patton began his power packed push across the burning sands, driving the Fox's forces pell-mell into Monty's 8th Army jaws.

Casablanca, which President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill selected as the site of one of their many historic meetings.

Casablanca . . . splendid public buildings, flanked by blazing, palm-shaded gardens. Chalk-white abodes, domes and minarets and contrasting squalor in the native quarter.

The continental French, sitting in street cafes, sipping their wine and reading their papers. The biblical simplicity of the "Arabs," hawking bric-a-brac on the streets, as though greeting Cook's Tour passengers on a one-day stopover.

Streets and cafes crowded with soldiers and sailors of Free France, England and the United States, strange contrasts to the red-fezed Moroccan soldiers standing guard at wharfs and warehouses.

Walls proclaiming the arrival of new attractions for movie fans, and others emblazoned, "Vive DeGaulle!" "Vive France!"

Busy docks in harbors still dotted with hulks of ships sunk in the first fighting in Africa. Men and material pouring off incoming ships in an endless procession.

Streets crowded with all manners of military vehicles, incongruously passing among horse-drawn, engine-less autos, autos driven by charcoal burning engines, donkey carts, and the perennial bicycles.

The dark "Arab" men, turbaned and clad in flowing white tunics, or patched "coats of many colors," their feet bare or sandaled. Street vendors de luxe, clamoring, eager to sell their baskets, shawls, leather goods, postcards; haggling endlessly over a few francs. "Small business men" in their tiny shops on the dirty, dark, winding streets of the native quarter, offering to sell ill-looking, ill-smelling foods.

Veiled "Arab" women, swathed from head to foot in long, flowing robes, small, timorous, looking not in the least like the dark, oriental sirens of an *Esquire* drawing.

"Arab" children, dirty, ragged, jabbering urchins, begging for a chance to earn a few francs shining shoes; pleading for "bom boms."

This was the panorama that greeted the men of the 82nd as they strode down the gangplank at Casablanca on the afternoon of 10 May 1943. Troops marched past the docks and warehouses through the streets of the city to Camp Don B. Passage staging area, near the northeastern edge of town.

Thus the outfit arrived at its new secret camp site to be welcomed by the most unbelievable assortment of merchandise and merchants imaginable. Arabs of all sizes, ages, and degrees of cleanliness were there with their souvenirs. These wrap-around garments they wear concealed everything from a bicycle to a kitchen stove, and everything was for sale.

OUJDA-MARNIA

The Casablanca stay was only a few days. Soon the Division was on the move again, this time northeastward by plane, truck, and train to Oujda French Morroco. The Chutists bivouaced at Oujda and the Gliderman at Marnia near the Algerian border.

The train ride from Casablanca to Oujda in French Northeast Morocco, a ride of eight days, was one of the most unusual experiences men of the 82nd had ever experienced. The train was a specially furnished series of these well-ventilated boxes stuck on wheels and fastened together dubiously with everything from dog chains to hair pins. The cars had been

built for transporting valuable war material, and they were labeled accordingly, "Forty Men or Eight Horses." The horses didn't mind; so who were the "dog faces" to gripe.

The days were filled with sightseeing; poker and crap games; and relaxing to the rocking rhythm of the rails in all the luxury of an African horse car. One ex-King of the Hobos cried with joy at the chance to hit the rails again after two years of high brow travel. The bellies of the men were filled with "C" Rations and vino, the latter smuggled on at every stop from "merchants" of all ages who swarmed over the train, and to whom the "C" Rations were smuggled in payment. Like our stomachs, the air was also filled —filled with the definite reminder that Arabs were within a mile and as usual needed an education in the uses of water and an introduction to Leaver brothers.

But the men learned as they traveled, and by the time they reached Oujda knew a bit more about striking a bargain with an Arab. At one of our habitual stops on the journey, one of the men, an ex-pawn broker by trade, jumped off the train for a quicky "rest" period, and before he could get back he bought a leather wallet, a pair of shoes, a bottle of wine, and a wrist watch. The wallet was more holes than leather; the shoes must have come right off the Arabs feet; the wine was putrid; and the watch didn't run. By the time he left Africa he knew better, and wouldn't have paid over half a month's pay for the junk. "Thank Heavens we haven't been getting business from such a people in the States," said the pawnbroker as he hopped back on the 40 and 8'er with the Aa-Rab still running after the box car yelling he'd been duped.

Then came Oujda with its few good looking women; its downtown Recreation Centre, a few bars here and there which did a thriving business in benzoazurine, gasoline, and shaving lotion; the horse-drawn junk heaps which ten years before had been out of date autos and now were the cabs of the hoypaloy.

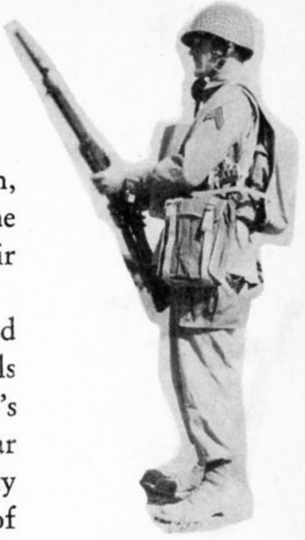
Oujda was worth seeing, if there was nothing else to do and if life had become so unbearable that one didn't care what happened to him. Occasionally someone slipped up here and there and was given a pass into town for a break from the training in the Dust Bowl.

The site of the camp was chosen with the care so typical of sites chosen for American training camps. On one side of the town there were the beautiful rolling plains, ankle-high grass which looked like a soft green carpet flowing gently over the hills and blending into the beauties of the colorful mountains on the left and the blue Mediterranean on the right.

So the camp was located on the other side of the town in the middle of the worst dust bowl on the continent of Africa. Every day at exactly five minutes to one the entire kitchen area of the camp was visited by a sand and wind "twister" just barely short of a tornado. Every day at exactly five minutes to one every man in camp had just been served his noon meal, and was sitting down in the sun to eat. For those who failed to take a good look at the food as it went into the mess kit there was that everlasting mystery of what in the devil they were eating besides the sand.

In addition to the scheduled jumps in tricky winds, there was the worst epidemic of dysentery ever imagined in a latrine orderly's nightmare, and jumps, scheduled or unscheduled, were made all through the day and night. Men on guard wore entrenching tools as "standard equipment."

Twelve miles northeast of Oujda just on the Moroccan side of the border was



the other main camp of the 82nd "All-American." Camp Marnia, with Brigadier General Keerens in charge was located like Oujda in a desolate, sterile, rocky, dusty, heat-seared valley, which seemed "Nowhere in North Africa" instead of the censors "Somewhere in North Africa" on the letterheads of these troops from a Division so recently from the States.

But enough of these social problems. Training had to go on. Overnight, bustling tent cities sprang up on what had been "Arab" goat pasture.

Oujda and Marnia brought the Division its first taste of extended field conditions. Troops lived in long straight rows of pup tents, interspaced with slit trenches. They slept on the ground or upon mattresses filled with straw. They squatted on the ground and ate from mess kits at the field kitchens. They bathed under an open-air shower at the water point or took sponge baths from their helmets. They shaved and washed in their helmets and learned the meaning of water discipline. They washed their clothing in wooden tubs or in halves of discarded oil drums. They gave each other haircuts. They worked through the heat of the African days on the rolling tree-less plain, and welcomed the cool of the evening.

THE OUJDA REVIEW AREA

Despite the climatic conditions the camp at Oujda was to become the greatest parade ground the Division had graced to date. The first Airborne Division and the first to grace Africa or any foreign soil was to be the proud recipient of virtually every dignitary in Northwestern Africa. The proud 82nd paraded their airborne backs and polished boots before 15 allied generals in less than a month.

On May 18th the Division colors were dipped for General Mark Clark, Commanding General of the Fifth Army, and the following day the men filed by again, this time for General "Tohey" Spaatz, the colorful commander of our African air force.

On June 3rd the Division again stepped out for a review, this time for Generals Patton, Clark, and Bradley, the Division's 1st Commanding General in World War II; Major General Gruenther, 5th Army Chief of Staff, and an impressive row of French and Spanish dignitaries, including Lt. General Luis Orgaz, High Commissioner of Spanish Morocco.*

The Division had been reinforced with troops, Washington - coded "EGB," and truly presented a grand spectacle as its even columns of marching men paraded past the reviewing stand to the accompaniment of the Division bands. Hundreds of parachutists were silhouetted against blue skies and dropped downward, as the Division's attached air strength roared overhead. That afternoon General Patton addressed the officers of the Division on their role in battle, and in his typical colorful "blood 'n guts" style, gave us a blow by blow account on how to act in battle and convinced us on the spot that he possessed the kind of leadership that wins wars.

On June 16th the series of Reviews and visits by dignitaries of General grade were appropriately climaxed when the "Old Man" of them all, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces in Africa paid the Division a short visit. He addressed the officers on the importance of discipline and its relation to an efficient fighting force. They could feel his personality and complete

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*Others were General D'Armee Auguist Noguess, Resident General in French Morocco; Francisio Delgado Serrano, Major General of Spanish Morocco; Brigadier General Alfredo Galera, Director of Native Affairs of Spanish Morocco; Lt. Gen. Julian Olivares, Liaison Officer of the Spanish High Commissioner with the resident General of French Morocco, Sr. Angel Silvela, ist Secy. of Embassy, Vice Counsel of Spain in Tangier; General au Bridage Georges Beucler, commanding the French-Oujda sub-Division; Bishop Henri Vielle, Vicar Apostolic of Rabat, and the Sultan of Morocco.

confidence in him engulfed the officers at once.

There was a guard of honor accompanied by the Division Band, but no review was held for General Eisenhower, as the Division was already busy making its preparations for its next move, and units of the 325th CT were having a grand scale glider problem, the largest that they had had to date. Covering eighty miles and lasting two days, the exercise was as comprehensive in covering the work the glider units were to do as any the parachute teams had accomplished.

All told, the "All American" was at Oujda for six weeks. Training was essential, but how, when, and where. The soldiers tried to train in the daytime. It was too hot, it was too hot and dirty to do anything. Then they began training at night — compass marches by small groups, organizing in the dark from simulated parachute drops and glider landings, moving across country at night and organizing positions, digging fox holes, laying wire, preparing mine fields by the light of the moon. All this worked out well but bayonet practice at 2 A. M. was a little too unique to bring enthusiasm.

In the darkness above, the formations of C-47's came and went as the troop carriers practiced navigation and night flying.

It was too hot to sleep in the daytime, and the troops became exhausted.

The various units had begun to accumulate mascots. One had a baby goat, one a monkey, and the 505th, still recovering from the shock of having to leave Max, the jumping dog, in the U. S. A., adopted a jackass, which they promptly tried to instruct in the art of jumping from a plane. The animal, however, did not have Max's good luck, and on its first jump, June 6, it broke its leg and had to be shot. Had the jump been a success the 505th states that jumping jackasses might have introduced a new mode of warfare.

Entertainment was nil.

Occasionally troops could be taken to Oujda in convoy. There they could visit the sidewalk cafes, sip their wine, eat pea soup, eggs and brown bread and watch the ever-curious picture of the French-Moroccan life about them.

American Red Cross and Chapel Nissen hutments were erected at the camp. The Red Cross operated a library and writing room, passed out donuts and lemonade, assisted in distribution of post exchange supplies, and presented outdoor motion pictures, welcome interludes in the isolated camp.

On June 18, two Arabs were accidently shot by members of the 325th while out on the rifle range at Marnia. It was unfortunate but even at this late date, the Arabs have been unable to comprehend the importance of not trespassing on Army training grounds. Sentries had been bothered much ever since the Division's arrival in Africa with uncautious Arabs wandering around in the middle of the night. Finally, Headquarters issued a sign and countersign system to be used by all guards. The first night the system proved effective, as one guard who had been warned about the possible presence on Italian Parachutists, fired twice, missed, then clubbed an unfortunate and unwise Arab on the back of the head.

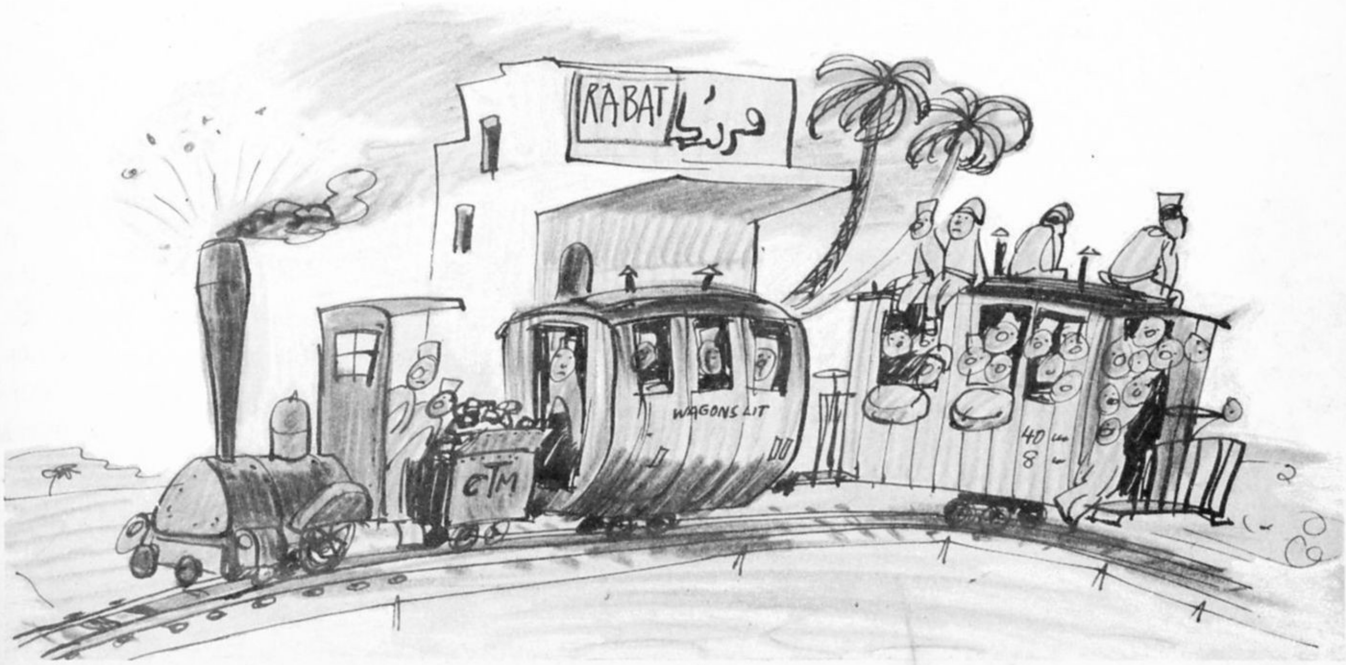
The Division was now in the process of its next move. Closer to combat. On the morning of June 16 the advance elements departed by truck for the Tunisian area, more specifically, Kairouan. More elements followed on the 21st and 24th and 6th of July; the majority of troops covering the approximately 1000 miles by air.

The next stop, the next foreign country, Tunisia, Kairouan, Tunisia by glider, plane, truck and train. Many crossed the barran Atlas Mountains in a five-hour flight over Algeria, but some less fortunate had another regretable experience with French trains. For them there was plenty of work. The Box Car Blues was playing again. At one point an entire trainload of equipment was transferred to another train; and as the supplies had to be guarded at all stops, there were 24-hour guard tours. But the trip itself was well worth the trouble it involved. The men saw signs all along the way which told stories in themselves of the fighting which had taken place there. It was a further introduction to the results of a fight won and lost, the end of the German Afrika Corps.

For the forty and eight cars which were again in use, the men traveled in a reasonable degree of style. One car even had lights, water, radio, stove, food, hammocks, shelter, and ten tons of supplies in addition to its three G. I. occupants. This was the oasis where a cup of coffee could be had any hour of the day or night—for ten francs. Cut-throats? No, just the ordinary "trooper" with ambition to get ahead.

When the trains finally arrived in Tunis one crew had increased by two; a couple of British parachutists who decided somewhere along the line during a stop and a drink that they couldn't leave their Yank buddies. They were swell fellows, and were given a royal send-off when their M. P. Guard of Honor arrived to escort them away. The day before had been the Fourth of July and no American ever celebrated it more enthusiastically than those two Limey jumpers. When the time came to depart they proudly pulled themselves up to their knees and marched off with an M. P. on each collar.

The trip whether by glider, plane, or train brought the G. I. frame of mind one step nearer its combat peak. For weeks bodies and tempers had been kicked around in the sweltering heat of the dirty, dusty desert. Now came long rides over the combat scared wreckage of the Tunisian battlefields. From the air it was even more impressive. A long trip aboard plane or glider, sights left by battle, and time to think and realize how close to realism the ride really was.



Kairouan was something of a lull before the storm. Training was continuous as usual but conditions were slightly better and the desert hardened 82nd began to temper the edge they had wetted so long for the jumps ahead. If green troops are always a problem, certainly these men would cut to a minimum any doubts about success. They were hard, confident, uncomfortable, mean and eager for a change, that would spell combat or any other and to "Africa, Lovely, Africa."

Kairouan, Tunisia is a holy city, the third ranking holy city in all Islam, according to Uncle Sam's "Guide to North Africa." Holy cities are "off limits," of course, not because they are holy, but because they art too filthy even for healthy soldiers to enter. Cleanliness does appear to be next to Moslem godliness. To this holy city came the Moslems to die, but apparently none had been informed of the ancient adage that "dirt never killed anybody."

The division bivouaced in a huge arc around the city. For some elements it was just more desert and dirt, but for many the training grind under the hot African sun was now spelled by an occasional more shady respite.

Wherever possible the troops were bivouaced in some kind of shade. Olive groves surrounded by high cactus hedges were numerous. Officers and men pitched their tents on the sandy soil in the welcome shade of the olive trees. Outside the cactus walls, the training areas were hot and dry per S. O. P. African style, but in the camp areas, the olive trees offered some measure of succor from the scorching sun. A faithful Mediterranean breeze made the camps around Kairouan much more habitable than anything the treeless fields and stodgy air had offered at Oujda and Marnia.

Troops passed their free time lolling in the shade, reading, playing cards or ball, talking or eating green olives and almonds. Convoys went almost daily over the rough, winding roads to Sousse or Enfidaville, where officers and men—oblivious of the cares of war for an afternoon—swam in the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Bob Hope with Frances Langford and troupe came in for a great show, and regular band concerts, outdoor movies, and refreshments from Red Cross workers offered welcome diversion on the long evenings before one stretched out to sleep beneath the glistening stars and golden moon of the quiet African nights.

For the first time dispersal and camouflage were strictly enforced replacing the well-lined tents and huts of garrison. Within 250 short miles—lay the enemy in Sicily, nervously waiting for the invasion which certainly would soon come. The troops began to sense the nearness of battle. Lying beneath the stars at night they could hear the steady drone of the R. A. F. Wellingtons on their regular bombing missions. Relics of the recently-fought battle of Tunisia were plentiful, and enemy helmets, hand grenades, ammunition, jerry cans, and shell fragments could be found everywhere.

Situation tents were set up almost immediately in the 30-miles arc of "All American" unit camps around Kairouan (K-Ration) and daily conferences were held to discuss the division role in the pending attack on the iron muscled underbelly of Festung Fortress Europa.

Parts of Tunis like Kairouan were "off limits" to Allied soldiers, but unlike Kairouan it had a great deal to interest a paratrooper wetted for combat yet to begin. The challenge of the Casbah in the conniving heads of the trouble loving troopers was not to be denied. The celebrated Casbah, or native quarter of Tunis was strictly, quite definitely and positively "off limits" and out of bounds to all Americans and British troops including in capital letters the 82nd Airborne Division, heroes of the "Bama" frying pan, Phenix City, Cotton Ed Smith, and Fayetteville. The challenge for the "All American" troopers was double. The M. P. patrol was terrific, and the Casbah was definitely the most interesting section of town. Many of the men found that the Casbah was loaded with plenty of the things they wanted; souvenirs, etc., and a few other things they didn't want but brought back at no extra charge. The Medics started working in shifts.

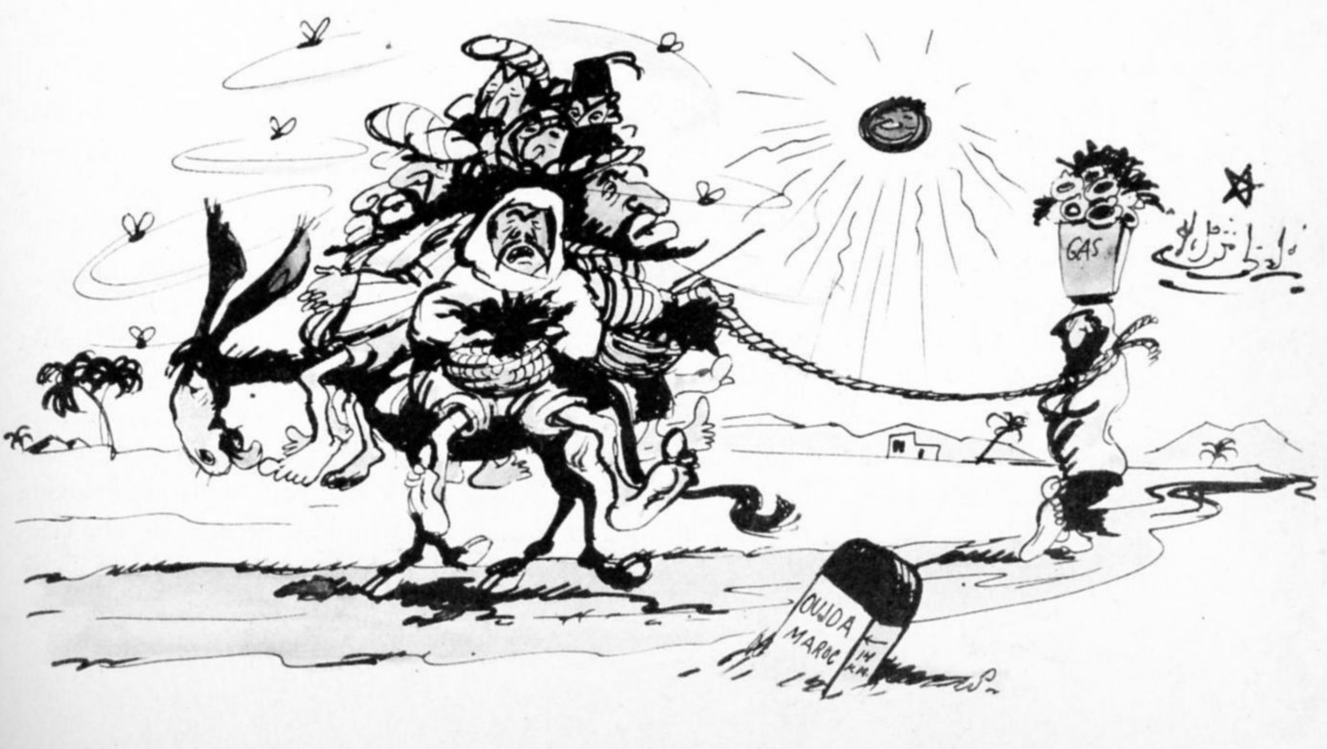
The M. P.'s it seemed, had also been instructed in the danger of lifting a veil; and with the ever present possibility of the G. I. mattress cover walking past actually covering a Sheik's indescretion and not a G. I., there was little they could do. And in addition to the "pig in a poke" possibility there was also that poke in the puss angle. So the troopers came and went; the Casbah did a thriving business; and the M. P.'s "done their duty."

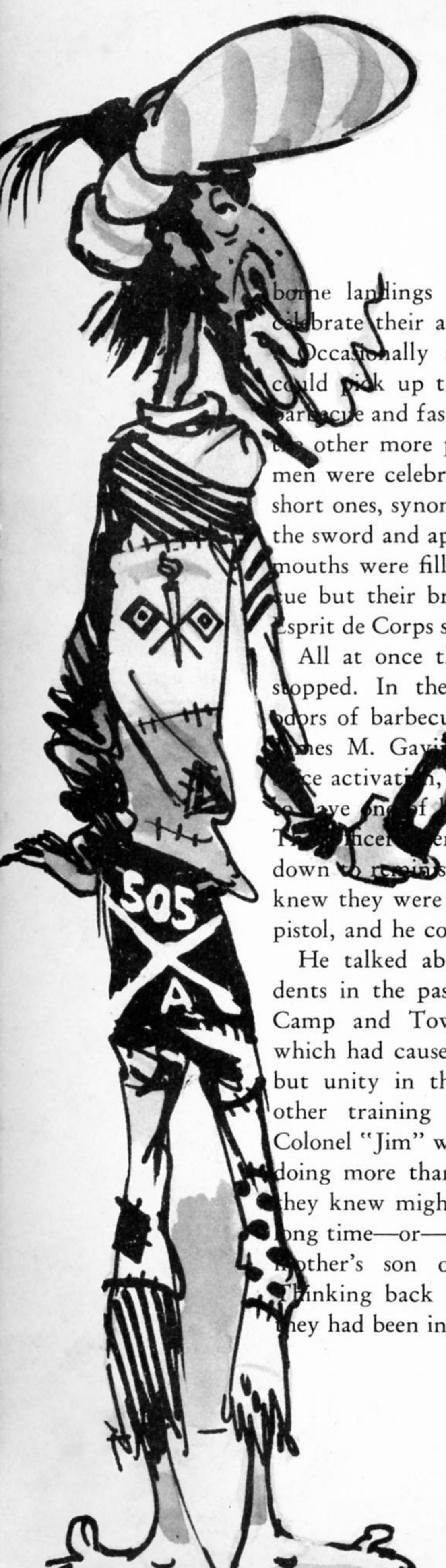
Training was as usual "continuous" with both day and night exercises. A special schedule called for a "Siesta" from 1330 to 1530 during the hottest part of the day. Troops got up at 0430 and started work at 0600. They got madder and meaner. The Krauts could expect anything.

On the Fourth of July the mechanism of final battle preparation swung into full gear with General Ridgway and his Staff flying to Algiers where they joined the Command Staff of the First Armored Corps (reinforced) to complete plans for the invasion of Sicily under Lt. General George S. Patton, commander of the highly secret Seventh Army.

Every man in the division was filled with speculation on the wheres and whats of the immediate future, but the flys, sand, and sun had done their job in their own insufferable way. With the body hardened and the mind still filled with the disagreeable training area, anticipation for the future and combat could not have been keener. Morale was at a peak. The men wanted to tackle anything.

Such were the conditions when the troopers of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment nucleous of the 82nd Combat Team which was to make the initial air-





borne landings on Sicily, assembled to celebrate their activation anniversary.

Occasionally a more sensitive nostril could pick up the fragrance of cooking barbecue and fast disappearing beer above the other more powerful odors—for the men were celebrating and hoisting a few short ones, synonyms to these students of the sword and apostles of the brew. Their mouths were filled with beer and barbecue but their brains were filled with an Esprit de Corps seldom seen in any group.

All at once the noise of the occasion stopped. In the midst of the mingled odors of barbecue, beer, and Arabs, Col. James M. Gavin, the regimental C. O. since activation, climbed upon a beer keg to have one of his "talks with his boys." The officers were dismissed as he settled down to reminiscing with his men. They knew they were hotter than a two-dollar pistol, and he confirmed their thoughts.

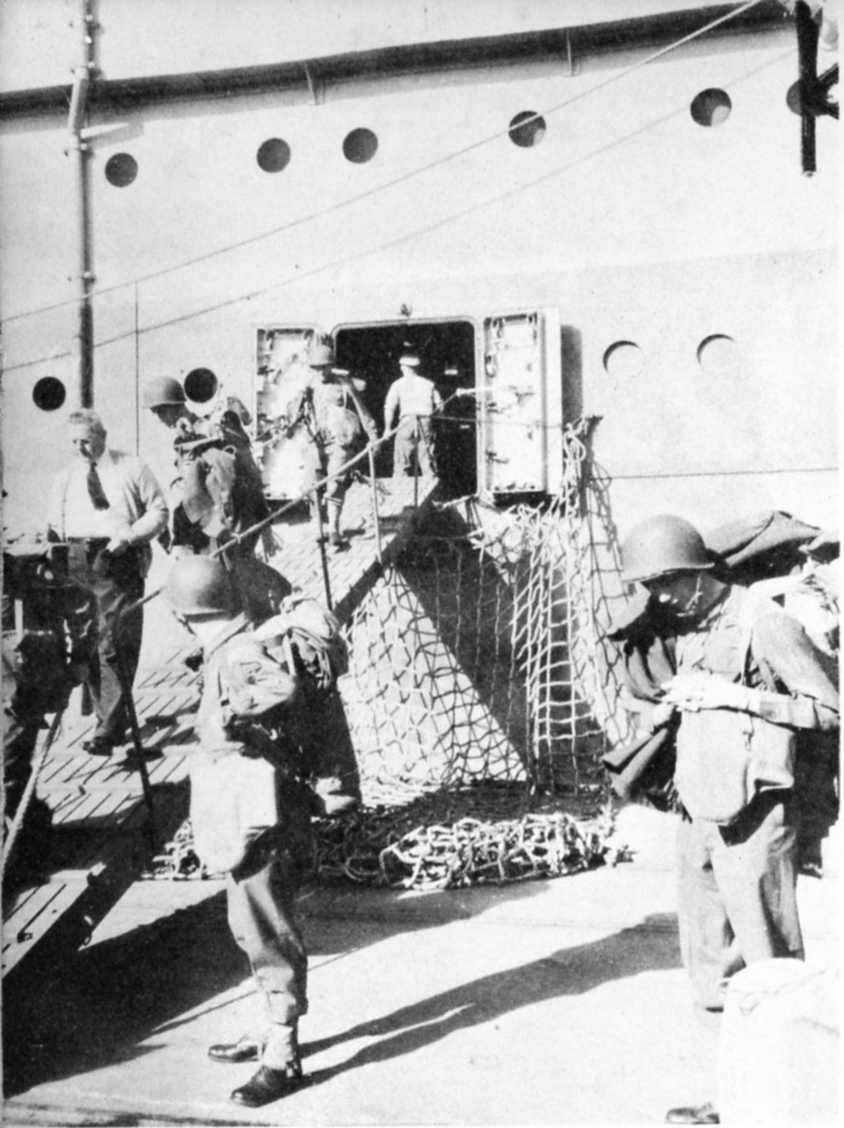
He talked about several of the incidents in the past year, the Cotton Fish Camp and Town Pump "Campaigns" which had caused trouble on the outside but unity in the Regiment, and many other training camp incidents. While Colonel "Jim" was talking, the men were doing more than quietly drinking what they knew might be their last beer for a long time—or—just their last beer; every mother's son of them was thinking. Thinking back over the past year since they had been in the outfit, some of them as far back as that July, 1942 when the regiment was born amid the heat, dust, and mud of the Benning Frying Pan, the Benning in stifling heat not unlike that on this African evening birthday. All through that quiet, easy-going speech of his the men listened, laughed and thought. And on the faces of the Colonel and the men there was that look of complete confidence each felt in the other which spoke for itself. They would follow him through hell if he ordered it, and would have the Colors flying over Satan's C. P. hours ahead of schedule.

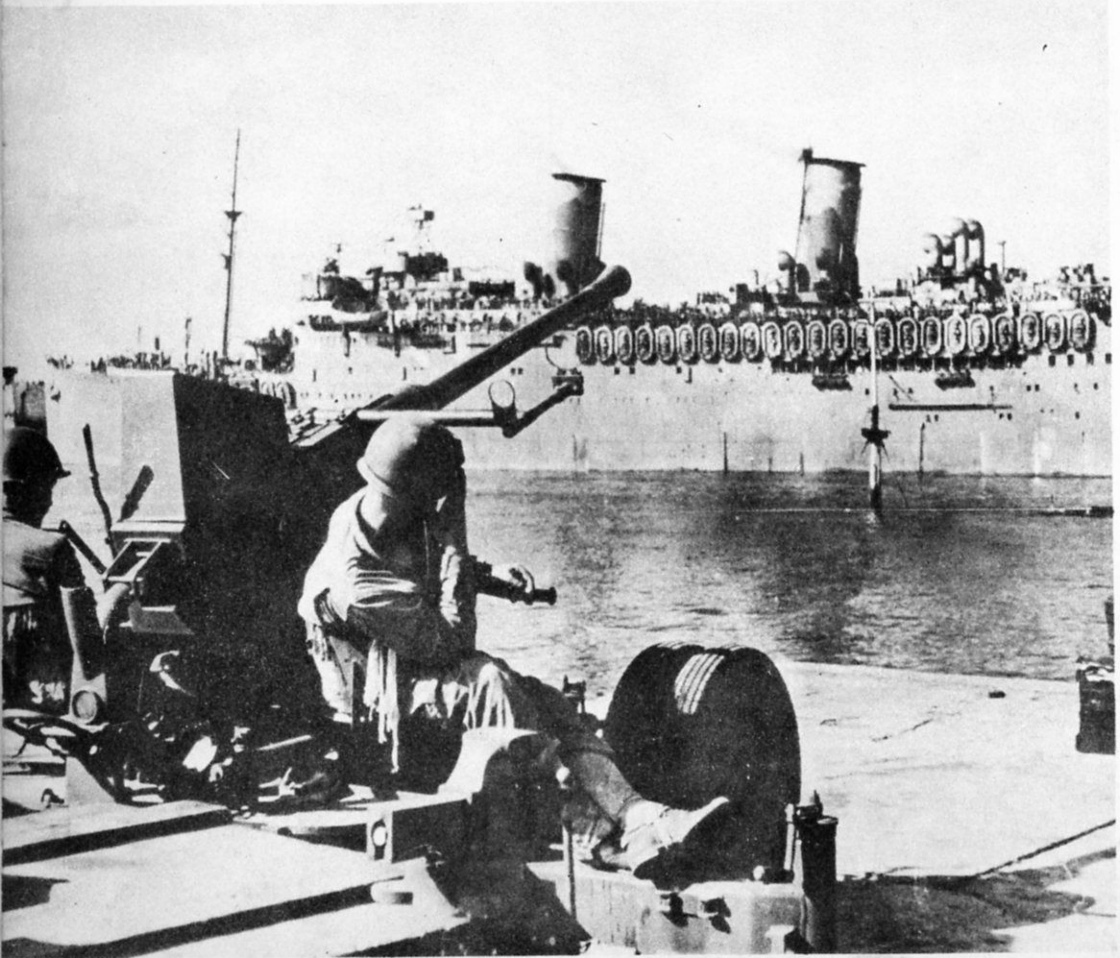
Friday night, July 9, the 505th Parachute Combat Team, plus the Third Battalion of the 504th Parachute Combat Team, dropped from the skies over Sicily and 82nd Airborne Division Headquarters announced to the division:

"At this moment, troops of this division are in combat against the enemy. Last night, at 2030, the CT 505th dropped successfully on the Island of Sicily (husky) and opened the door for a powerful seaborne Allied army, now storming the beaches. The remainder of this division will follow as fast as air transport will permit."

And so began the 82nd's battle tests for an unparalleled combat future. The end of a pre-combat training year which had pushed from the Bayous of Louisiana to the dust bowls of the Sahara.

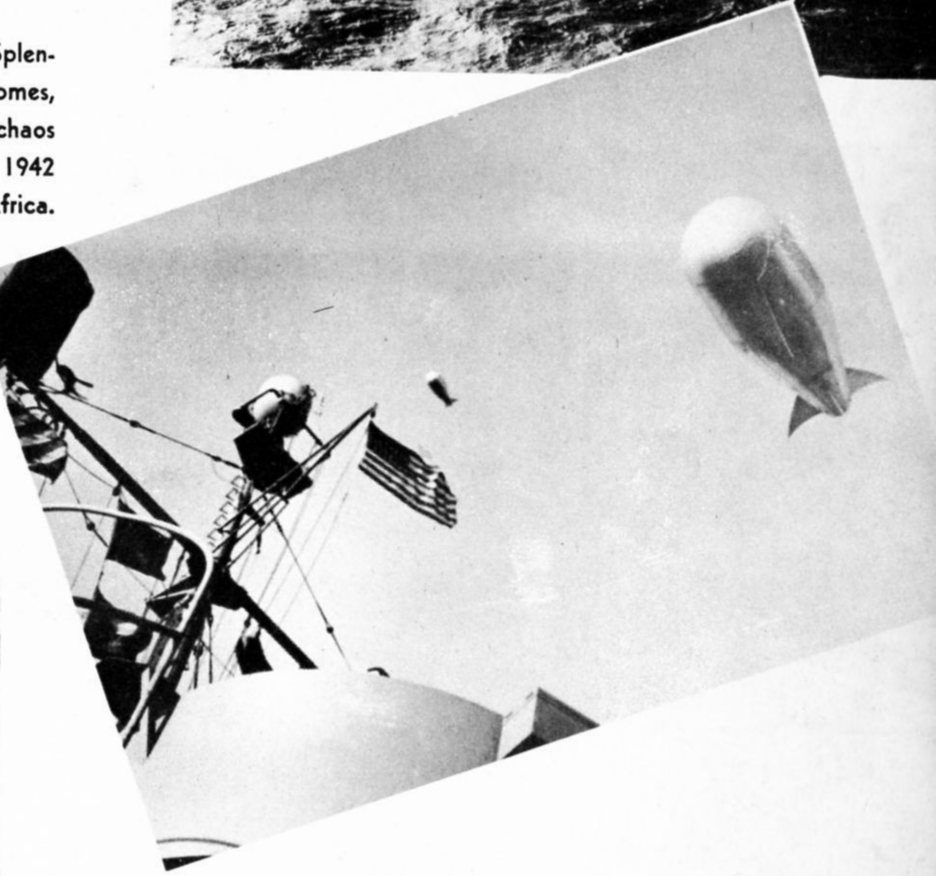
CASA



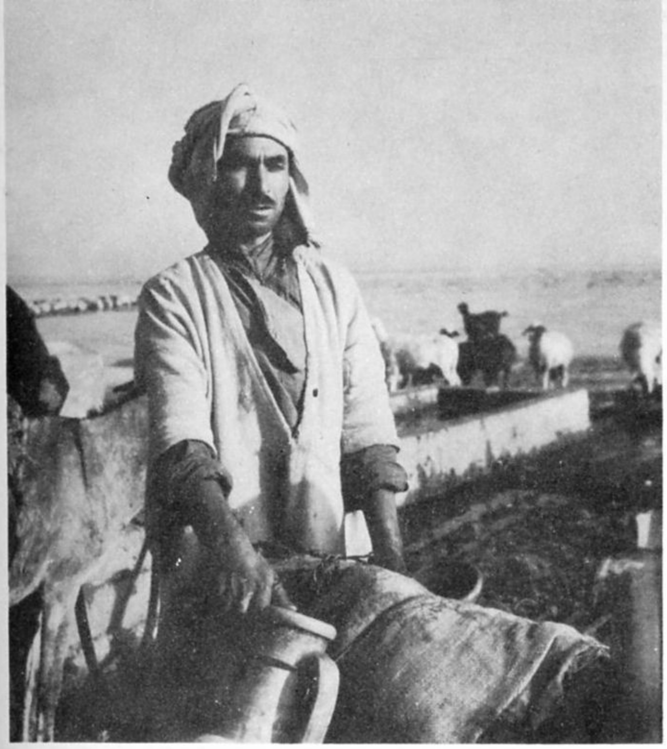


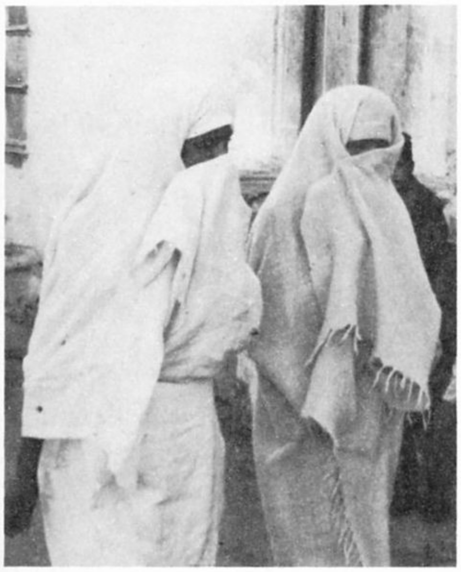
BLANCA

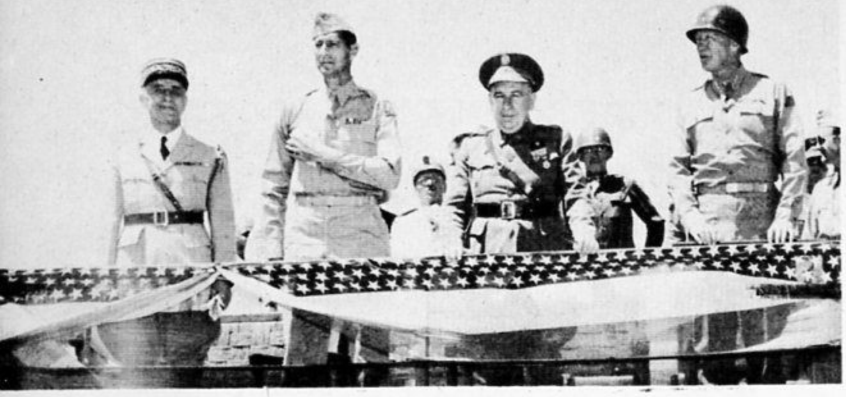
City of contrasts where East meets West—Splendid public buildings, palm shaded gardens, domes, minarets, and squalor in the native quarter, a chaos of sight, sound and smell. Here in November 1942 American troops began their assault on Axis Africa.



The strange inhabitants of the arid Moslem world.



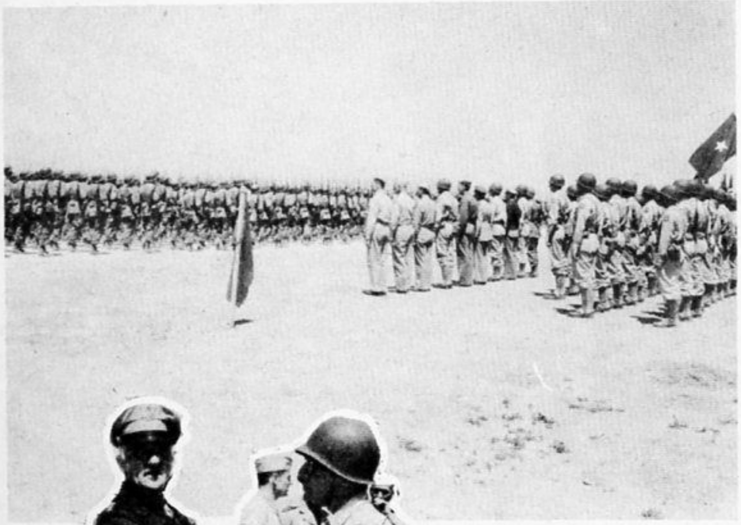


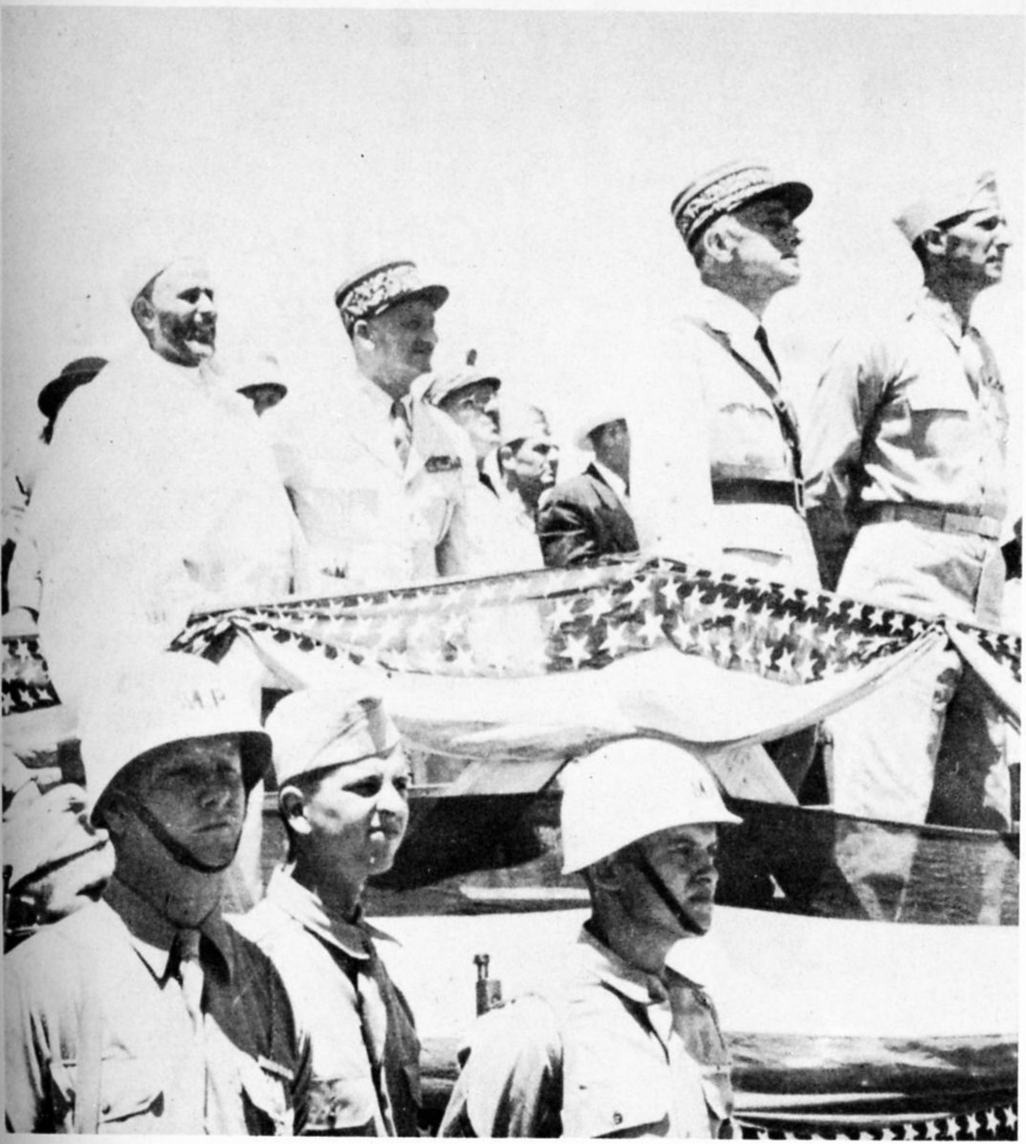


OUJDA PARADE GROUND

THE EIGHTY-SECOND PASSES IN REVIEW

The 82nd Airborne Division, exponents of a new idea, airborne warfare, displayed their trade before fifteen Generals in Oujda, French Morocco. Honored guests and observers included: the Sultan of Morocco; American Generals Eisenhower, Spaatz, Clark, Patton, and Bradley; the high Commissioner of Spanish Morocco and many other French, Spanish and American dignitaries.




M.P.

OUJDA—KAIROUAN

C.F.A.
Kt
54 271

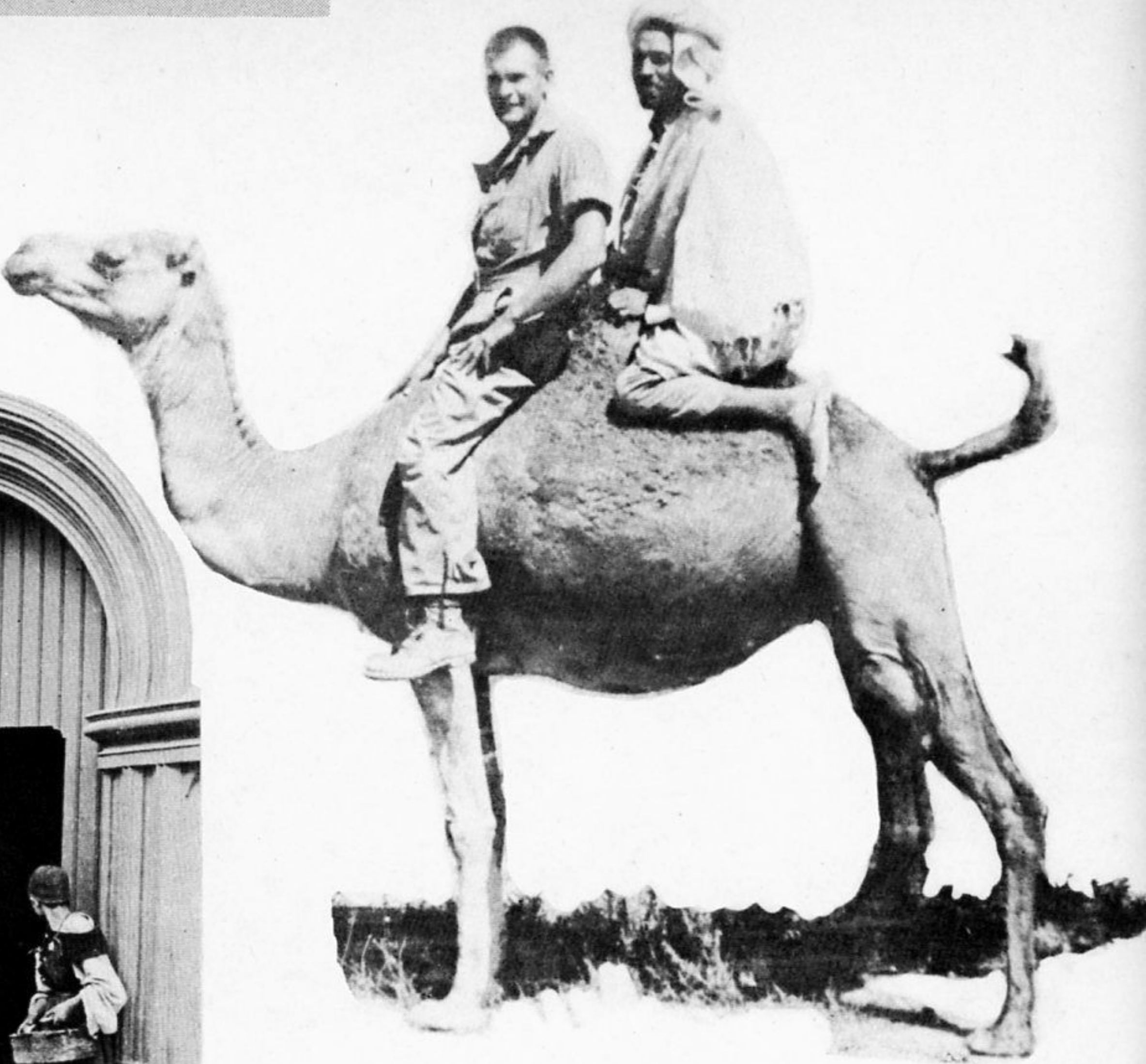
Transportation by African Streamliner
Casablanca to Oujda.

From the air the camp at Oujda looked like ants on a sandbar. It was hot, dirty, dry, and desolate.

Bob Hope and Frances Langford entertained in the desert town of Kairouan.

Desert beggars besieged our men wherever the train stopped. (right) Oujda street merchants.

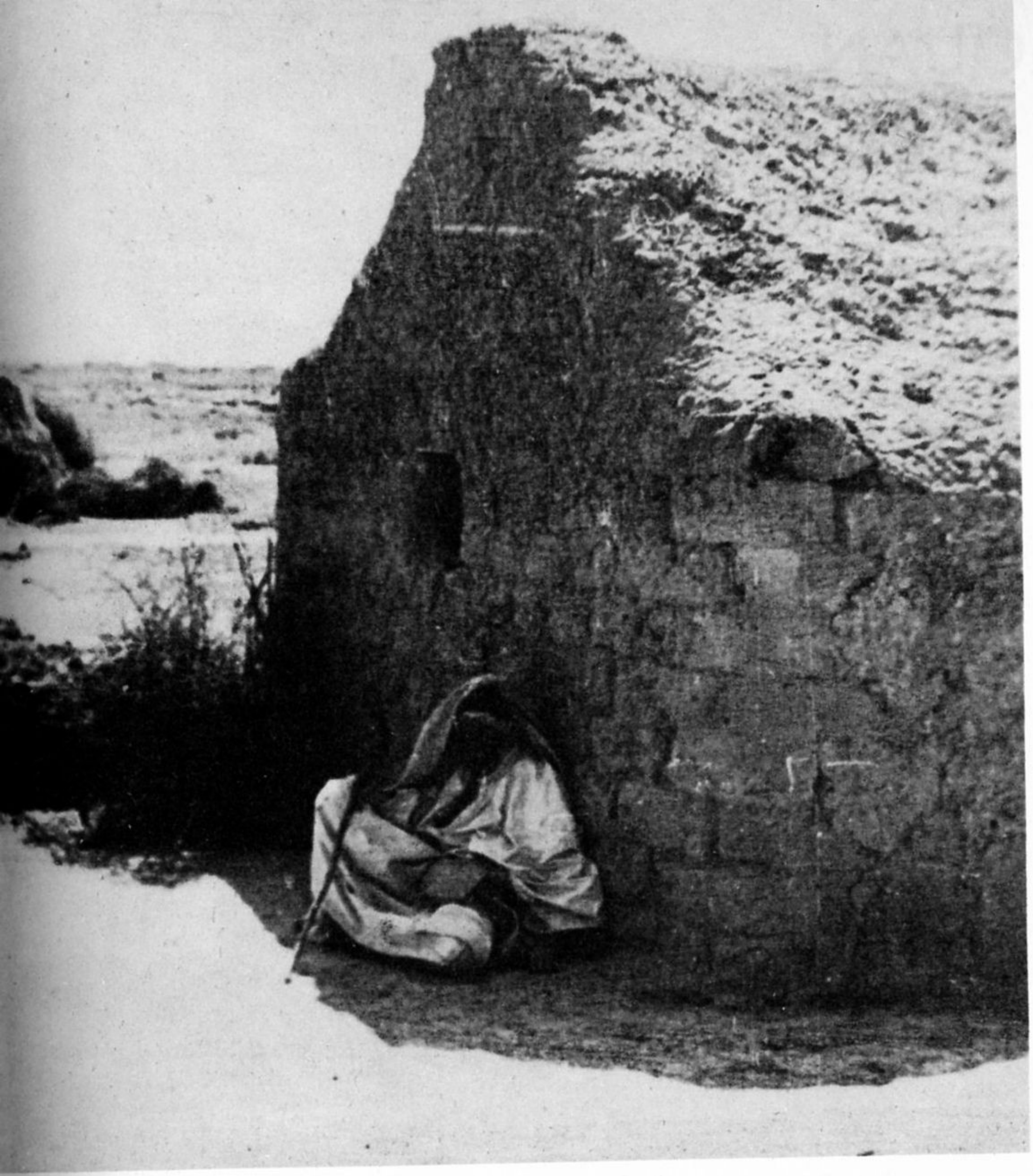
OUJDA–KAIROUAN



Hassan Ben Bost with Abdullah
on Mohammed.

Number 48 (nuff said)

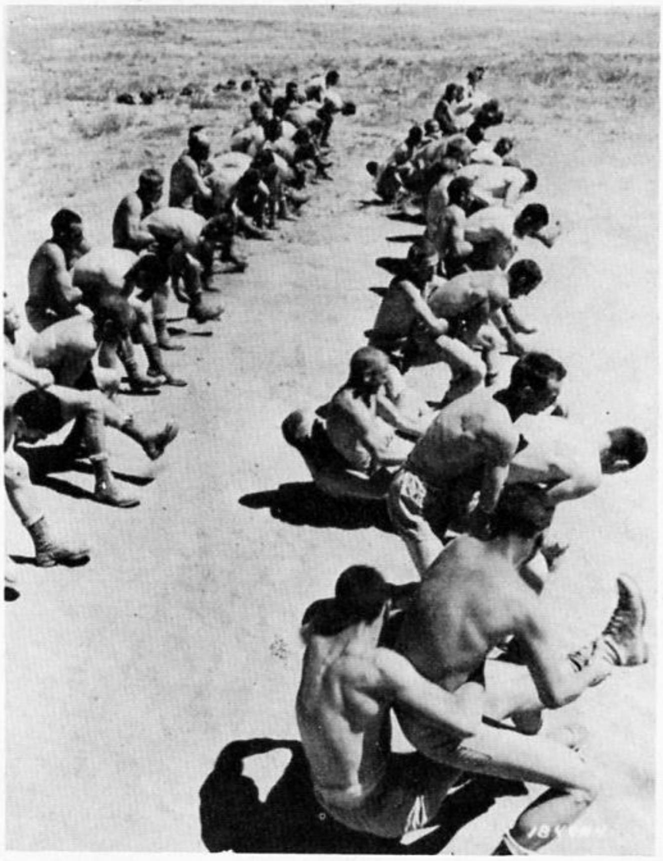
Arab snake charmers in
Oujda startled young.



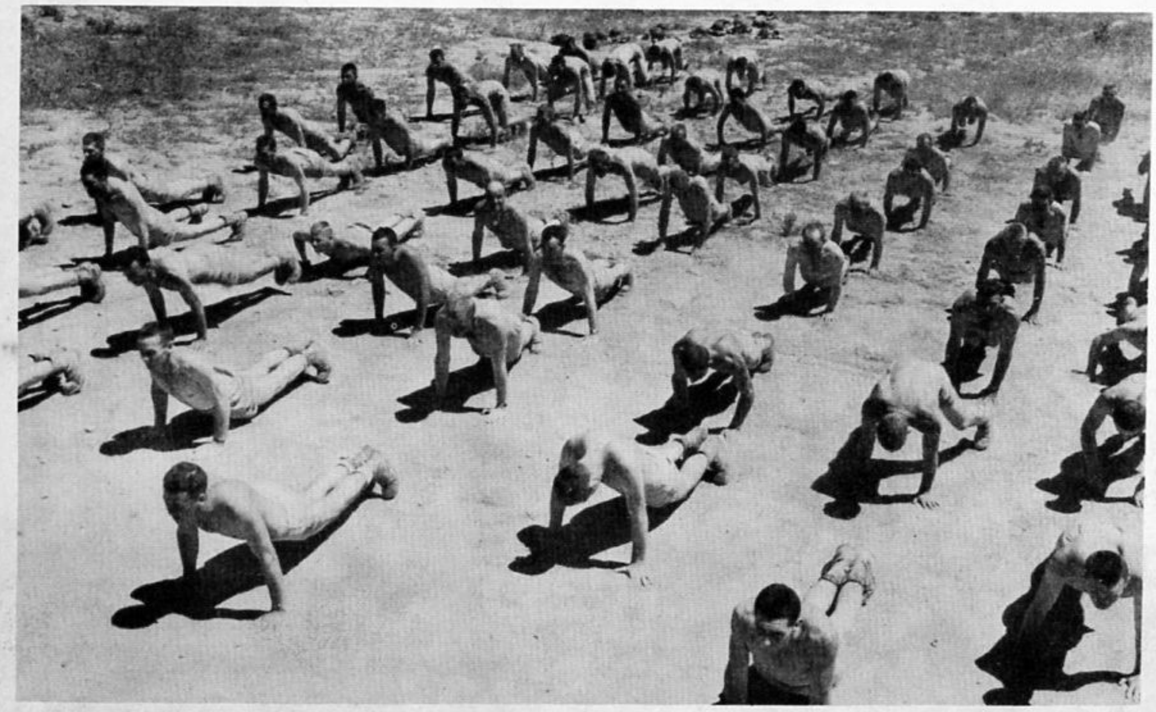
Africa was mighty, mighty hot. Shade was but an evil interlude between baths of searing sun.

INVASION TRAINING

IKE EISENHOWER—The big boss was one of many Generals who came to Oujda to see for himself what manner of men were there.



Coupled with the heat, these physical gyrations were slightly rough on the constitution.



←

Pushups in the sun to make the 82nd America's toughest fighting division.

→

Landing shock — physically and mentally the troopers were biting nails and ready for anything.

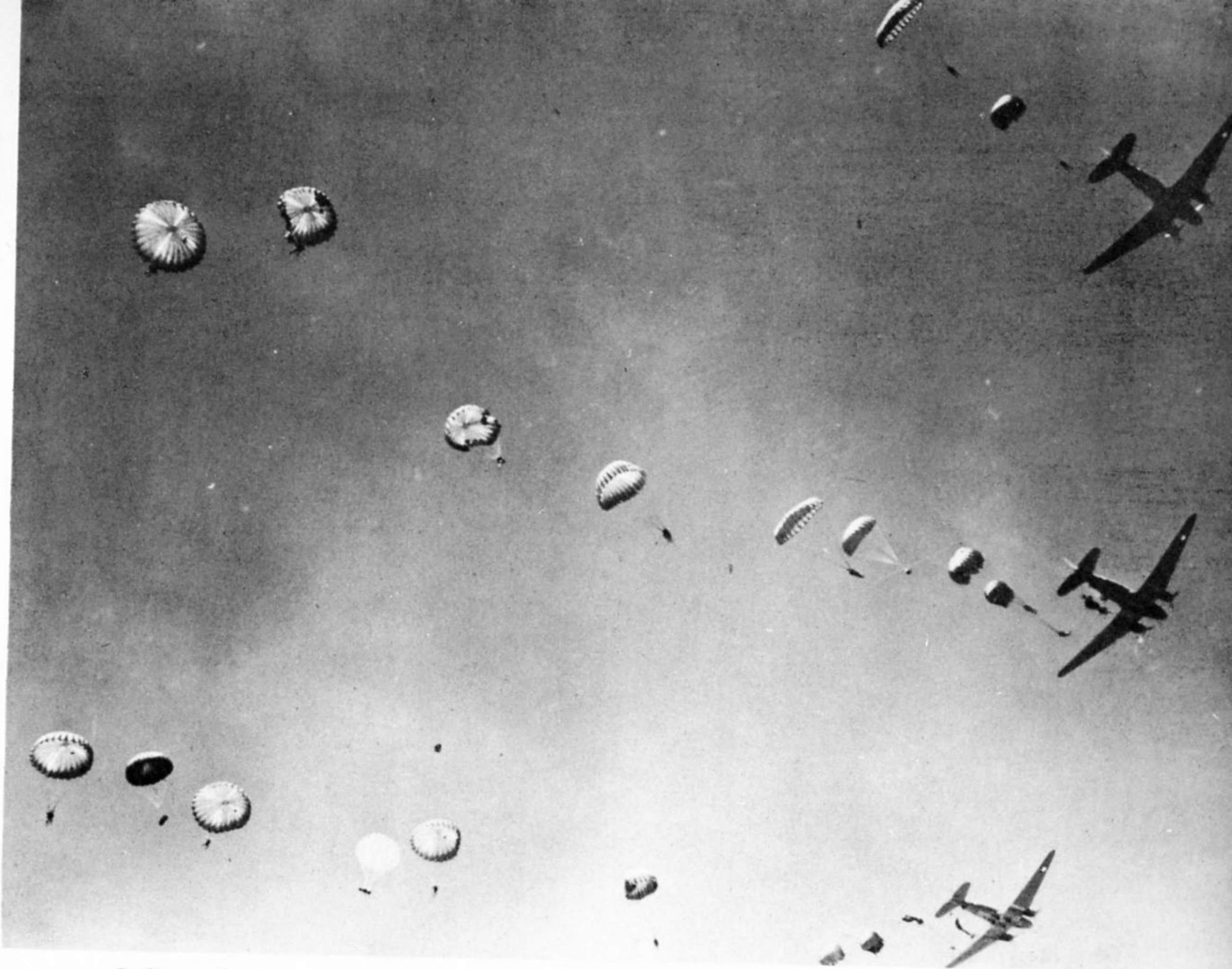
INVASION TRAINING

278
Boston
BOOMERANG
Ruth

Gen. Mark Clarke
watches his new
airborne charges
train for combat.
Troop Carrier planes trained
with us for our
4 airborne invasions
to come.

A parapack is loaded. This equipment bundle will drop with the troopers if all goes right.

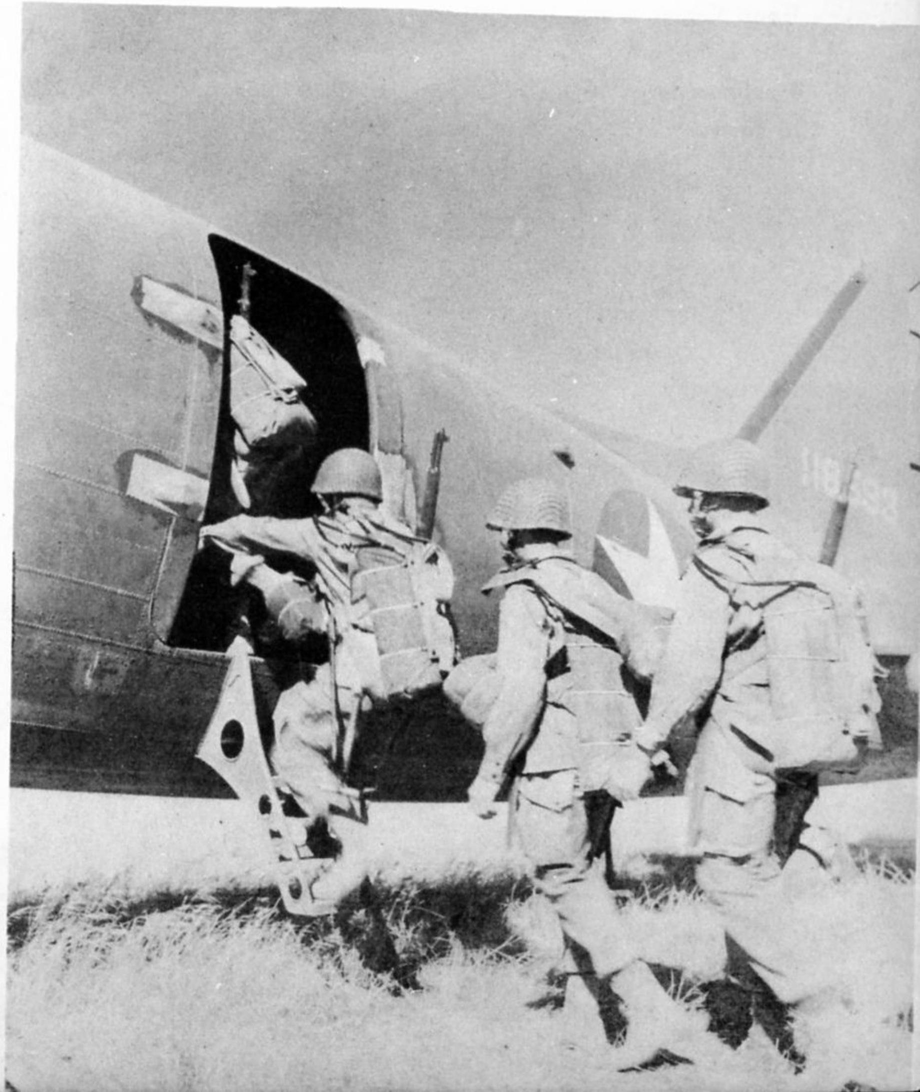
The ultimate in Parachute Training — a mass jump with invasion combat load.

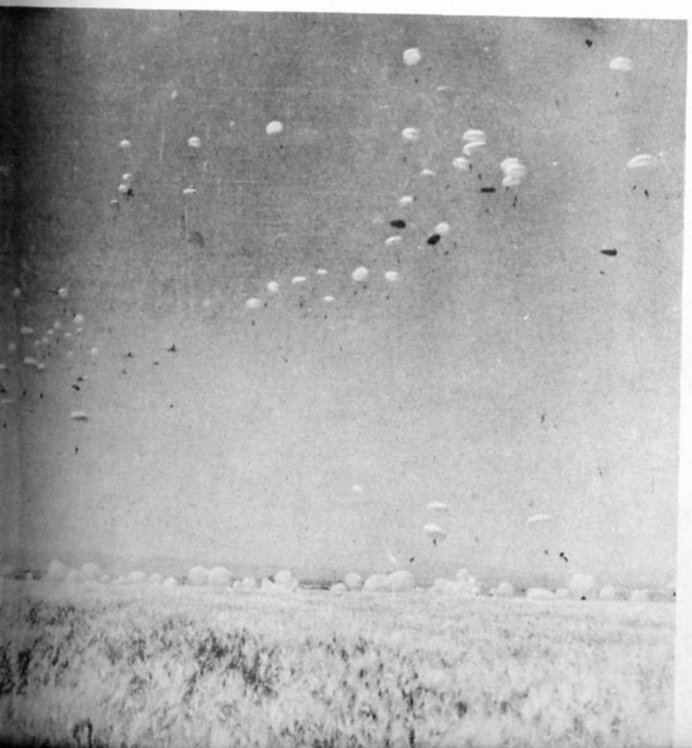


Bailing out
over Oujda.

A rugged topkick with the equipment he has after dropping his chute.

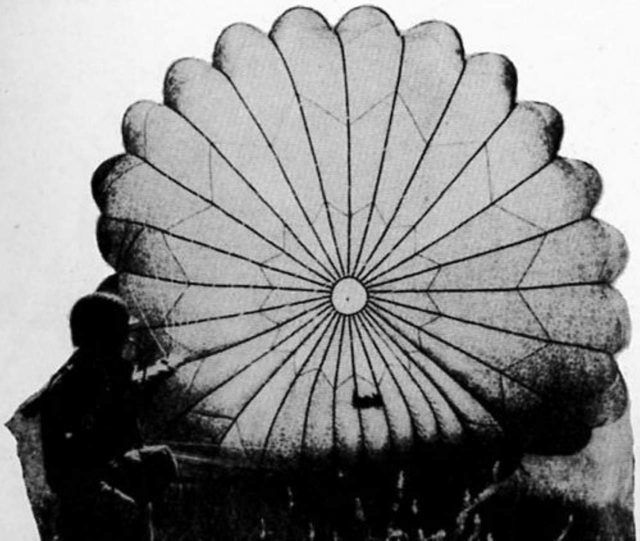
Right: **Loading up** for a practice jump.





INVASION TRAINING

82nd troops were trained to a T in all the mechanics of this new set of tactics known as airborne warfare.



Land, Set Up, and Ready to Fire.

Every practice has
a few minor jump injuries.

Finding and unpacking
cargo chutes prove to
be a major problem.

SICILY

"Not the beginning of the end
But the end of the beginning."

—WINSTON CHURCHILL.

Biazzo Ridge

HOW THE 82ND SAVED SICILY

"THE ALLIED airborne operation in Sicily was decisive despite widely scattered drops which must be expected in a night landing. It is my opinion that if it had not been for the allied airborne forces (82nd) blocking the Herman Goering Armored Division from reaching the beachhead, that Division would have driven the initial seaborne forces back into the sea. I attribute the entire success of the Allied Sicilian Operation to the delaying of German Reserves (by the 82nd Airborne Division) until sufficient forces had been landed by sea to resist the counterattacks by our defending forces (the strength of which had been held in mobile reserve)."

KURT STUDENT
General der Flieger Troops

The above opinion was rendered at the Nuremburg trials by General Kurt Student foremost authority in the German army on Airborne Operations. Student commanded the German Airborne Operation on Crete and was Chief of Staff of all German Paratroops from 1943 until his capture by Allied forces after the German collapse.

SICILIAN D-DAY, H-4

SMASHING The UNDERBELLY OF HITLER'S "FESTUNG EUROPA" WITH THE FIRST LARGE-SCALE AIRBORNE INVASION IN U. S. MILITARY HISTORY

"THE AFRICAN sun, like a bloody curious eye, hung on the rim of the world as hundreds of airplane engines coughed into life, spewing miniature dust storms across the flat wastes of a desert airfield."

"Thin aluminum skins of C-47's vibrated like drawn snare drums and as paratroopers heaved themselves up into the planes and sought their predesignated seats, they wrinkled their noses at the smell of gasoline and lacquer that flooded the planes' interiors."

The 82nd Airborne Division was on its way to the first large scale Airborne operation in history, the first for any American Division, and the first night landing on record.

Sicily was more than just another airborne invasion. Here, the technique of a new mode of warfare was combat tested for the first time.

All the Airborne theory, planning and training conducted by the allied War Counsels had its first large scale test in Sicily. Even the Russians, who first tried mass parachute jumps, and the Germans, who tested the principle on Crete and in the lowlands, had never dared such a large scale attack. The 82nd Airborne was to be the first allied unit to touch Europe in the invasion of what Winston Churchill called the soft underbelly of Hitler's festung (fortress) Europa. "Not the beginning of the end, but the end of the beginning," he called it, and for the Airborne and allied strategists, Sicily was even more. It was the proving ground for the Airborne landings in Normandy, Holland, Southern France and across the Rhine. If the original ideas of Airborne warfare worked in Sicily, so would they in later campaigns.

Poor fighters manned these.

The plan for the invasion of Sicily provided for landings to be made on the southeastern extremity of the island, with British and Canadian forces on the east coast and American forces on the south coast. The assaulting paratroopers, consisting of the 505th combat team and 3rd Bn 504 and commanded by Col. James M. Gavin, were to land during the night D-1/D in the areas north and east of Gela. The mission in brief was to capture and secure high ground in that area and to disrupt communications and movements of enemy reserves during the night.

D-1, the day of the first lift, was, as usual for that time of year in North Africa, hot and clear. The men of the combat team stationed near Kairouan, Tunisia, lounged in their bivouac area, made last preparations of arms and equipment, ate supper at 1600 hours, and went to the ten airdromes from which they were to take off. The planes carrying the troopers to their combat baptism cleared the fields at 11:15 P. M., July 9th. The route was by way of Malta, thence directly to the Sicilian Coast, east of Gela, and the drop zones.

Most of the men, upon landing, found themselves alone or near only one other or a few of their comrades. Those who were not already pinned down by fire immediately set out to find others—thus the fighting was begun and continued by groups of all sizes and compositions, and against a variety of objectives. Such action can be described only in its individual instances, as it occurred.

One of the most colorful victories was accomplished by 1st Lieutenant F. E. Thomas, Company "I," 504th, without bloodshed. While with several men under his command, being served a meal by friendly civilians, he was surprised and covered by the weapons of a small German force which had three disabled tanks in the vicinity, including one Mark VI. Lieutenant Thomas resorted to reason with his captor, pointing out the inevitability of Allied victory and the futility of his captor's efforts. It turned out that among the Germans there was one severely wounded man for whom the leader desired the excellent medical aid which he knew the Americans could afford. Consequently, an understanding was reached. The Americans were released and given custody of the wounded man, promising to secure him immediate medical treatment. The Germans put their tanks out of commission, abandoned them, and departed in the opposite direction.

A vastly different sort of action involving a 1st Battalion group is narrated by Jack Thompson, Chicago Tribune correspondent, who jumped with the First Lift:

"One group of the 1st Battalion, including Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Gorham, landed four miles south of Niscemi, about 2 1/2 miles from the scheduled DZ. They were just east of a very sturdy, thick-walled farmhouse which had been converted into a military fort held by 60 men with 4 heavy machine guns and 6 lights. It was well wired in with trench defenses. Colonel Gorham ordered an assault on the house, and it was organized and led by Captain Edwin Sayre and 22 men. Their first attack was launched at 2 o'clock in the morning. They were held up then, but attacked again just before dawn, with rifles, grenades, one 60mm mortar and a bazooka. They forced the Italians back out of the trenches and into the house and attacked the house with grenades. Sayre led the assault, carrying one hand grenade in his teeth and another in his left hand, with his carbine in his right hand. It was after they had taken the farmhouse that he discovered that the man who was covering him was armed only with a trench knife and not a tommy gun as he had thought. A rifle grenade fired at about ten feet blew open the door, but the door swung shut again. Sayre walked up, threw open the door, and pitched a hand grenade inside. They found a total of 15 dead and took 45 prisoners, some of whom were Germans. Four paratroops were wounded, one of whom later died. The house soon came under fire from an 88, and Col. Gorham withdrew his men back to another hill."

GELA
AGRIGENTO
REDERE
OBBEDIRE
The visitors pass thru Vittorio.

This group later made contact with the 1st Division, and joined the 2nd Bn. 16th Inf., with which they fought two days until relieved. In resisting an enemy attack while with the 16th Inf., paratroopers succeeded with their rocket-launchers in stopping several tanks. It was in such an act at this time that Lt. Col. Arthur Gorham,

C. O., 1st Bn., was killed. This episode is also related by Mr. Thompson:

"The position where Gorham's men were at that time acting as assault troops with the 16th Inf., with whom they had made contact, came under heavy attack by Mark VI and Mark IV tanks and enemy artillery, as well as extremely heavy machine gun fire. Col. Gorham was killed by a shell from a Mark VI while firing a bazooka at the tanks on the nearby road. Captain Comstock, Medical Officer, ran to his aid and was wounded by the next shell burst. Lt. Dean McCandless, who was nearby, ran up to help the wounded doctor and called for Corporal Thomas Higgins to get a jeep and evacuate him. Higgins ran a quarter of a mile through a concentration of machine gun fire until he found a jeep. The driver was reluctant to go into this fire, so Higgins was joined by a paratroop cook, Private Bernard Williams. The two of them drove the jeep under fire back to the hill and with the aid of Lt. McCandless evacuated Captain Comstock and the body of Col. Gorham."

The 2nd Battalion serial landed south of Ragusa, 25 miles from its drop zone, and was attacked before reaching the ground. Nevertheless, a large part of the Serial was assembled under its CO, Major Alexander, by noon of the 10th. Even during that morning, it was engaged in attacking enemy positions near S. Croce-Camerina, where it took 45 prisoners. Thence, it advanced on the town itself, occupied it after a short but hard fight, and captured 144 more prisoners and a great deal of equipment.

Just before the fated jump.

Two and one-half miles southeast of Niscemi, a group of men from the 3rd battalion, 504th, under Lieutenant Willis J. Ferrill, Company "I," ambushed a force of 350 Germans from the Hermann Goering Division, who were retreating up the road.

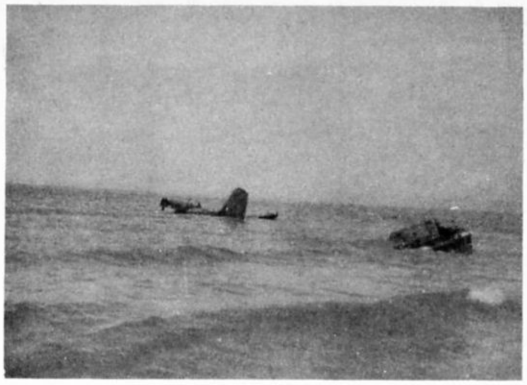
The paratroopers, who by the end of the afternoon of D-Day numbered 110, had taken up a defensive position on a hill. They had already shot up a German patrol, and one small group had demolished an Italian patrol, killing 14. Eleven of these Italians were killed by two privates, Shelby R. Hord and Thomas E. Lane. On the following day, after Ferrill's force had begun to increase, it was in position on a hill at noon when an enemy column was observed coming up the road from the south. With the Germans were several American prisoners. Lieutenant Ferrill withheld fire until the Germans were almost opposite his position. Then, at noon, the Germans suddenly halted for a ten-minute break. The Americans waited until the Germans started to get up and put on their packs, and then fired on them with devastating effect. The battle lasted all afternoon. It was joined by two enemy tanks which shelled the Americans from the far-off hills. Late in the afternoon, a German lieutenant came up the hill with a white flag to arrange a surrender, but when he saw the Americans were parachutists he refused to surrender and went down the hill again. Then the battle was resumed and lasted until dusk, when the Germans withdrew, leaving 50 dead. The cost to the Americans was 5 killed and 15 wounded. The hill from which the Americans fought was identified on the map as Castle Nocera.

Of the 3rd Battalion Serial, 505th, 45 men under 1st Lieutenant F. Willis, Battery C, 456th P'chute F. A. Bn., joined forward elements of the 180th Infantry, and served with them as assault troops; 60 others, with 3 guns of the 456th were the first troops to enter Vittoria. It was on this occasion that 1st Lieutenant William J. Harris, 3rd Battalion Hdqrs. Company, taken prisoner by the Italians, persuaded the garrison commander of the futility of resistance and induced him to surrender himself and his command of 80 men on the spot. Vittoria became the first large Axis town in Europe to surrender to the 82nd.

A group of about 40 men from 505 Headquarters Serial, including men from two platoons of Engineers, was under the command of 1st Lieutenant H. H. Swingler, Headquarters Commandant. This group occupied, early in the morning of the 10th, an area of high ground commanding the road not leading inland from the 45th Division beaches, and is credited with greatly facilitating the landing of that Division. They destroyed one armored vehicle as it approached the beach, cut off advance elements seeking to retire before the 45th's attack, reduced several pillboxes, and themselves captured 5 officers and 96 men. This same group joined Colonel Gavin on the 11th in time to participate in the action at Biazzo Ridge.

180 men from the 3rd Battalion, under Major Krause, were the backbone of the force which fought the Hermann Goering Division at Biazzo Ridge.

Biazzo Ridge is a prominence about 12 miles west of Vittoria on the Gela Highway. Colonel Gavin, approaching it the morning of the 11th from the direction of Vittoria with the 3rd Battalion force mentioned above, was warned of the presence of Germans. He succeeded in compelling them to retire from the ridge and in occupying the crest of it, but, after an attempt to continue his advance, decided to organize the high ground and to be prepared to defend it against counterattack. During the day, three 75mm pack howitzers, two 57mm anti-tank guns from the 45th Division, and a few rocket launchers were assembled.



A 504 transport near Gela.

The expected enemy counterattack with tanks — Mark IV's and Mark VI's — was made shortly after noon, and surged within 50 yards of the detachment's CP. One tank was knocked out by a 75mm pack howitzer fired at point blank range. Overhead fire was rendered by 155mm guns of the 45th Division and Navy 5 inchers. A last-ditch defense finally forced the enemy to withdraw for a reorganization.

In the meantime, reinforcements from the Headquarter's Serial arrived, including 11 General Sherman tanks, making possible an American attack that afternoon which completely routed the Germans and gave the detachment undisputed possession of the Ridge.

American losses in this action were 43 killed and 100 wounded. At least 50 enemy dead were left on the field, and 50 prisoners taken. Two German armored cars and one tank were knocked out, twelve 6-inch mortars, and many machine guns, small arms and vehicles taken. A machine gun crew of the 456th Field Artillery was credited with destruction of three Messerschmidts which attacked the position.

After burying the dead the morning of the 12th, the force proceeded toward Gela to join the rest of the 82nd, which was reassembling under Division Control, for the second and final phase of the Sicilian campaign.

On the night of D plus 1 the 504th Regimental Combat Team (minus the 3rd Battalion), led by Colonel R. H. Tucker, loaded

SICILY

in planes and took off from the dusty airstrips around Kairouan, Tunisia.

The air was considerably quieter than two days before, when a near gale had made more than an unusual number of men ill; the night was lighted by a quarter moon; and the drop zone was behind the 1st Division line. The highest hope for a safe crossing seemed justified; and then it occurred—one of the war's greatest tragedies.

"Nearing the Sicilian coast, the formation of C-47's were fired upon by a naval vessel. Immediately, as though upon a prearranged signal, other vessels fired. Planes dropped out of formation and crashed into the sea. Others, like clumsy whales, wheeled and attempted to get beyond the flak which rose in fountains of fire, lighting the stricken faces of men as they stared through the windows.

More planes dived into the sea and those that escaped broke formation and raced like a covey of quail for what they thought was the protection of the beach. But they were wrong. Over the beach they were hit again — this time by American ground units, who, having seen the naval barrage, believed the planes to be German. More planes fell, and from some of them men jumped and escaped alive; the less fortunate were riddled by flak before reaching the ground.

Fired upon by our own Navy and shore troops, the 504th Parachute Infantry was scattered like chaff in the wind over the length and breadth of Sicily Island. Col. Tucker's plane, after twice flying the length of the Sicilian coast and with over 2,000 flak holes through the fuselage, reached the DZ near Gela; however, few others were as fortunate and by morning only 400 of the regiment's 1,600 men (excluding the 3rd Battalion) had reached the regimental area.

Other plane loads of 504 men dropped in isolated groups on all parts of the island, and although unable to join the regiment, carried out demolitions, cut lines of communication, established inland road-blocks, ambushed German and Italian motorized columns, and caused confusion over such extensive areas behind the enemy lines that initial German radio reports estimated the number of American parachutists dropped to be over ten times the number actually participating!"

The Division Commander, Major General Matthew Ridgeway, with members of the division staff, landed on the beaches D-Day and joined in the fighting almost immediately.

PHASE NO. II

150 Miles and 15,475 Prisoners in 6 days.

By the afternoon of July 18, assembly and reorganization were completed, and the 82nd was ordered to advance by the next morning from the Realmonte Line.

Actually, some of the elements of the 504 combat teams were at Realmonte by noon of the 18th, before the formal order was issued. The entire combat team, moving by

marching and truck shuttle, assembled there during the day and secured, before dark, the Canne crossings and the high ground to the west. Before 2,100 of the 19th they had reached, and were stopped by, the Corps phase line halfway between Ribera and Sciacca. Every phase of the advance, and of subsequent advances as well, was led in person by General Ridgway, who kept himself in personal touch with the reconnaissance elements, the point, and the advance guard command. More than once, men of the front lines were confronted with the commanding stature of the "All American's" General.

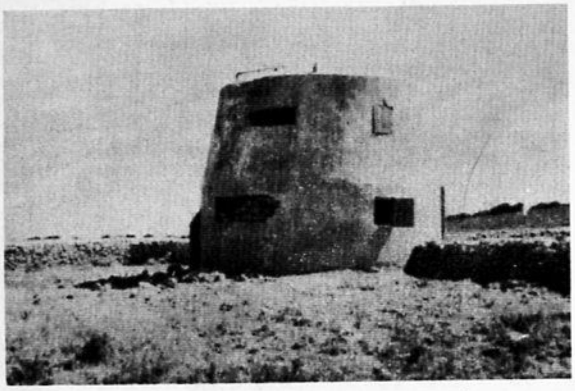
Substantially, all the circumstances of the advance on the 19th — the promptness and rapidity of it, the token resistance and voluntary surrender of isolated enemy garrisons — were repeated on the 20th, with a few minor variations. The advance during the day was 15-20 miles; the number of prisoners taken approximately 1,000; and 82nd casualties, two. Slight resistance and fast movements symbolized the entire advance across the Bellice River, through Tumminello, Montevago, and Sciacca. At Trapani, however, a strong defensive position was encountered. Here, the Italians put up a fierce barrage which was continued for two to three hours. The division artillery returned their fire, and one element advanced on the gun positions, forcing them to surrender before dark — the first contact had been made at 1600 hrs. In spite of this intense artillery duel, the only Airborne casualty of the afternoon was a bazooka operator who sustained a burn from his own weapon.

A treaty of surrender was dictated by General Ridgway to Italian Admiral Manfredi at Trapani, which netted a total of over 5,000 prisoners.

In each of the two phases of its participation in the Sicilian campaign, the Division had served effectively. In the first, it was prevented from achieving its specifically assigned mission; but at the cost of many casualties it successfully engaged, harassed, delayed or destroyed elements of the Hermann Goering, 15th Panzer, 4th Livorno, 54th Napoli, and 206th Coastal Divisions. Major General J. M. Swing, Airborne Advisor to General Eisenhower, declared that the work of the Airborne troops advanced the progress of the beach assault by two days. German General Kurt Student, leader of the Nazi jump on Crete, was even more complimentary, saying that the work of the 82nd saved the beachhead from being thrown back into the seas. In Sicily, as in succeeding jumps, there seemed to be no sure fire counter measures for Airborne landings.

The opposition during the second phase was considerably lighter. The division suffered only 23 casualties. But, during the 6 days of the second phase, it advanced 150 miles through enemy territory, principally on foot, and took prisoner or occupied ter-

SICILY



Mussolini's defenses were good.

ritory in which it later rounded up prisoners totalling 15,475 officers and men.

The 82nd captured a total of 23,191 prisoners during the entire Sicilian campaign, but this number does not include several thousand turned over to other units for processing in the early stages of the campaign, before the Division had assembled as a tactical unit.

It is probably because of the wide dispersion of the units in the Sicilian drop (some with the British, some with the Canadians, and others with the U. S. 1st and 45th Divisions), that the general public looks upon the Sicilian operation as a badly dispersed and ineffective effort, yet it was this dispersion which facilitated the task of the somewhat green 45th Division in its 1st combat engagement by taking pillboxes all along the coast in front of the 45th Beach assault.

In the words of General Gavin, who commanded the 505th Combat Team in Sicily as a Colonel, the added confusion of an airborne operation must be overcome by the initiative and self-reliance of the Airborne soldier: "Little things going wrong can cause a great deal of confusion in combat, and a certain amount must be accepted as normal, but if 'little things' go wrong in an airborne operation, you really have confusion.

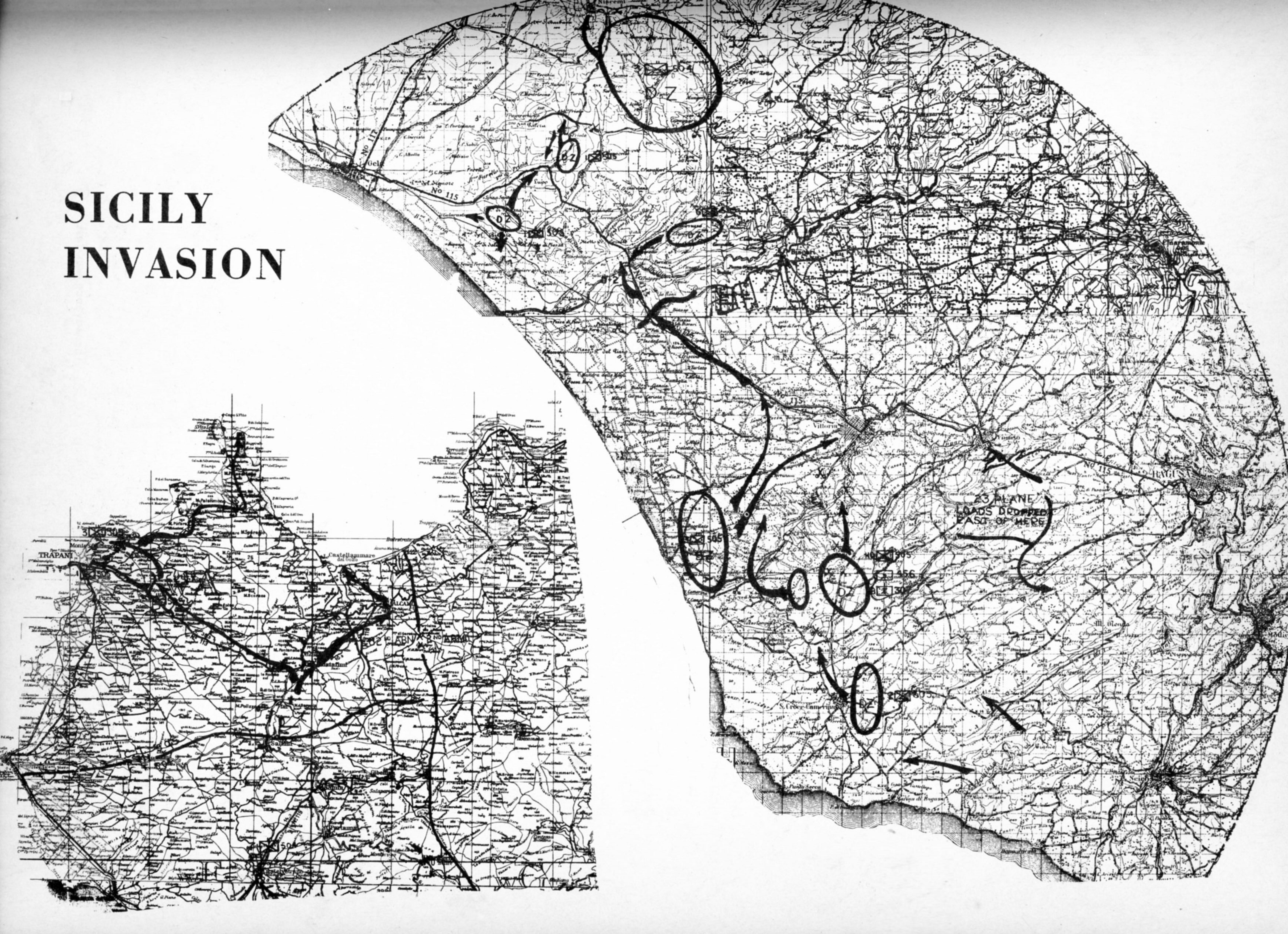
"The pay-off then is in the individual troopers and the small unit commanders. If they have learned their missions and those of other units working with them, and if they have the initiative and moral and physical courage to do something about it, everything will turn out all right.

"The Sicilian operation is a splendid example of this. In the last analysis, the accomplishment of the missions is a tribute to the courage and skill of the pilots and crews of the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing, who flew them in, and the fighting heart, individual skill, courage and initiative of the American Paratroopers. Here, in Sicily, they proved the hard way that vertical envelopment at night is feasible and almost impossible to stop, and that the American trooper has the mental and physical courage to try anything, asking and expecting no odds. For, as the dispersal was widespread, so also were the surprise and confusion of the enemy. Everywhere, the Germans and Italians saw small groups of troopers coming out of the night. The panic of not knowing how many were coming, or from where, had its demoralizing psychological effect. In addition, their accomplishments in ground fighting were an immeasurable contribution to the successful Sicilian campaign."

As Jack Thompson, noted War Correspondent who jumped with the 82nd in Sicily put it, "they (the men of the 82nd) displayed better fighting qualities and more sheer toughness than any (troops) I have ever seen." So ended the 82nd Airborne's first campaign on the long road to Berlin. Sicily was in Allied hands. Messina fell August 16th, and the 82nd returned to North Africa to prepare for Italy.

The advance was fast.

SICILY INVASION

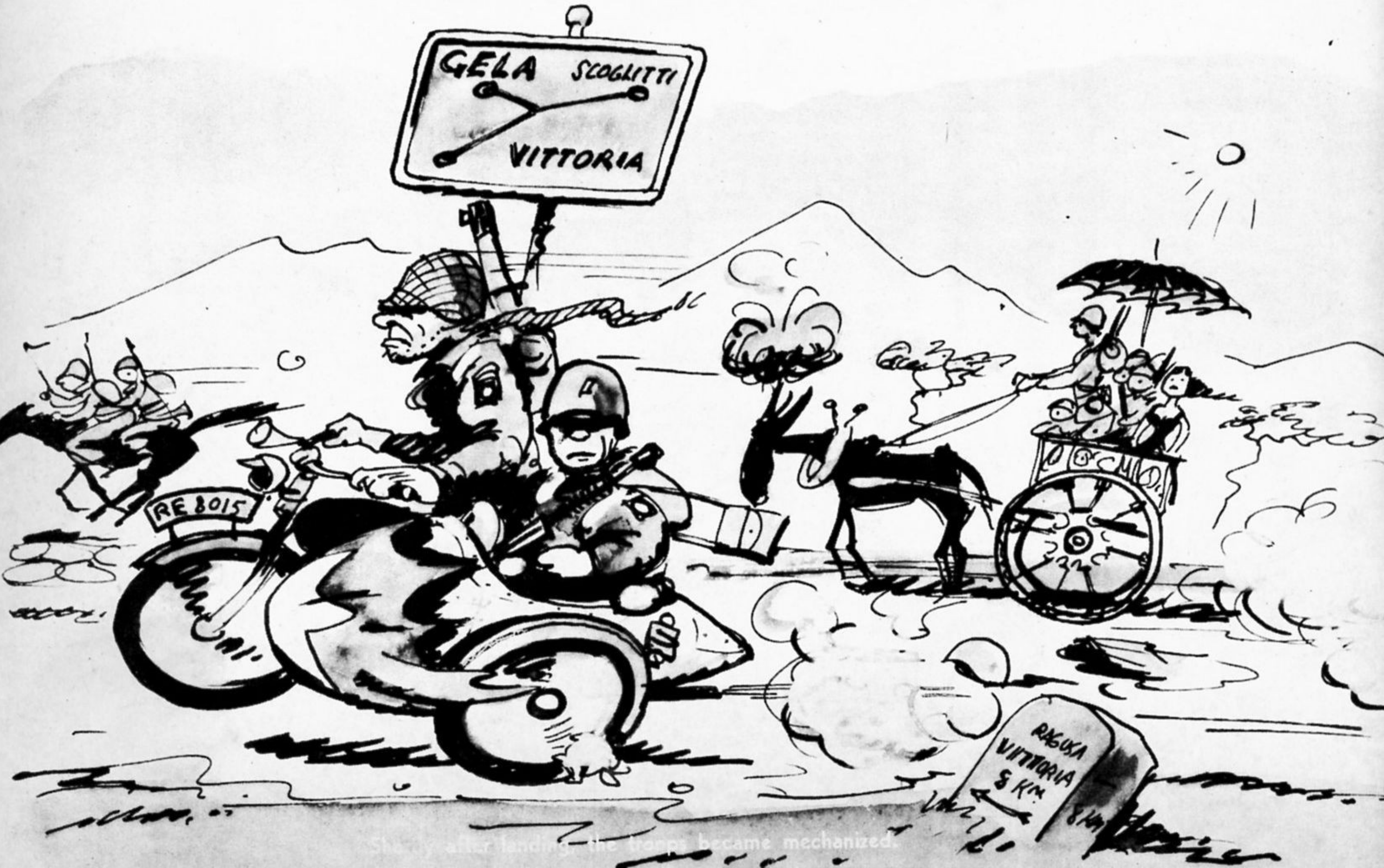

Niscemi
504
DZ
505
DZ
Gela
No 117
No 115
DZ
505
DZ
DZ
Vittoria
No 115
RAGUSA
23 PLANE LOADS DROPPED EAST OF HERE
505
DZ
505
DZ
356
307
DZ
505
S. Croce Camerina
TRAPANI
505
Castellammare del Golfo
82ND ABN
2ND ARMD
Partinico
505

HAND TO HAND

VIVA IL DUCE!
AVANTI!
NIENTE!
VIVA SAVOIA!
DEFENDER

BAYONET ATTACK

FRANCESCA
GUIDO


GELA
SCOGLITTI
VITTORIA
RE 8015
RAGUSA
VITTORIA
8 KM.
8 KM

Shortly after landing, the troops became mechanized.

HELL BENT FOR HITLER

Briefing in the N. African Desert.

Goodbye and good luck
Col. Gavin and General
Kierans who was shot
down 2 days later with
the 504.

Ground Air-Team — Col. Gavin
and the Air Corps Flight Commander

Last Minute Instructions.

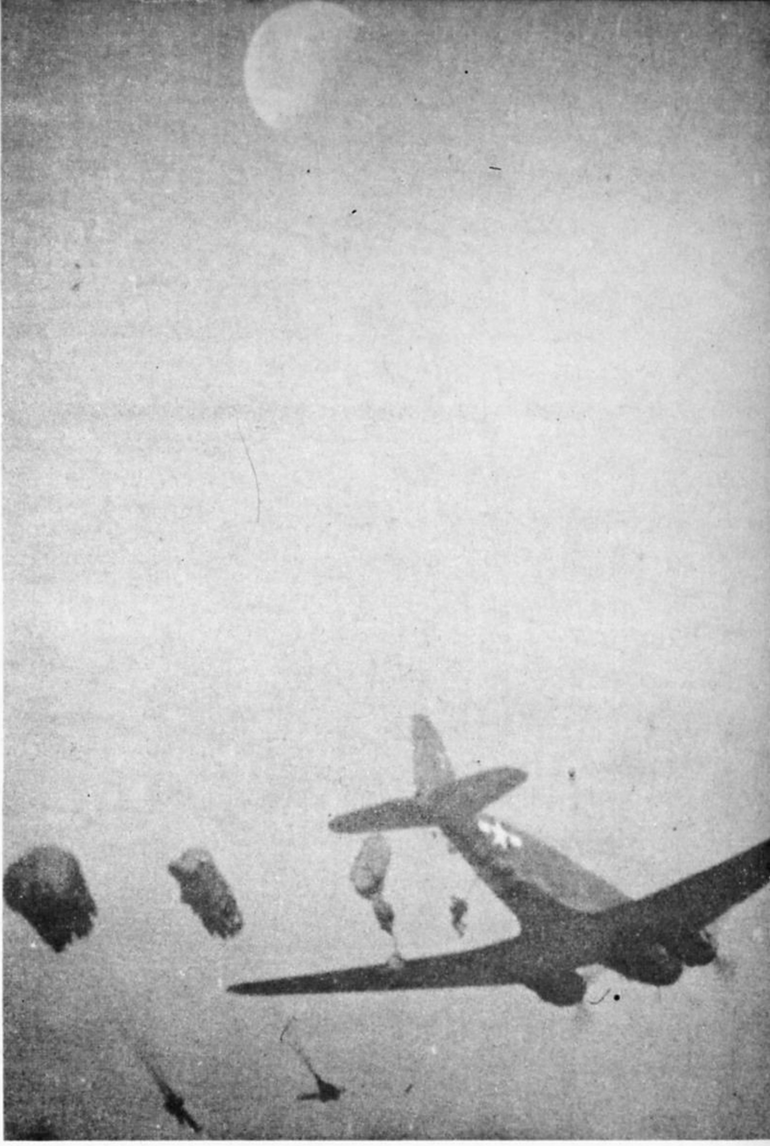
Sweatin' it out—

GOOD-BY AFRICA

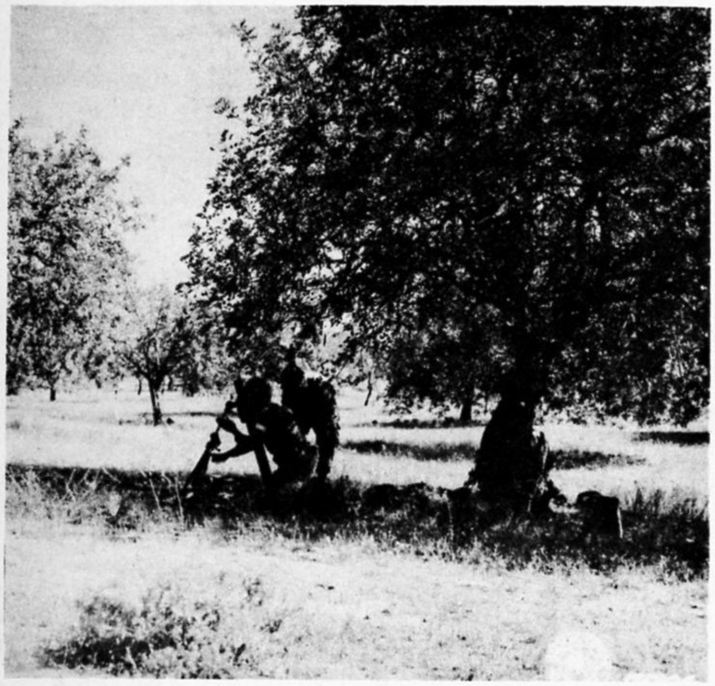
LOADING UP FOR Combat

ATTACK

SICILY A STORY OF DUSTY ROADS, RIDGES,
STONE WALLS, WINE, PILLBOXES,
OLIVE TREES, MULE CARTS,
FRUIT SEASONS, AND
HARD FIGHTING



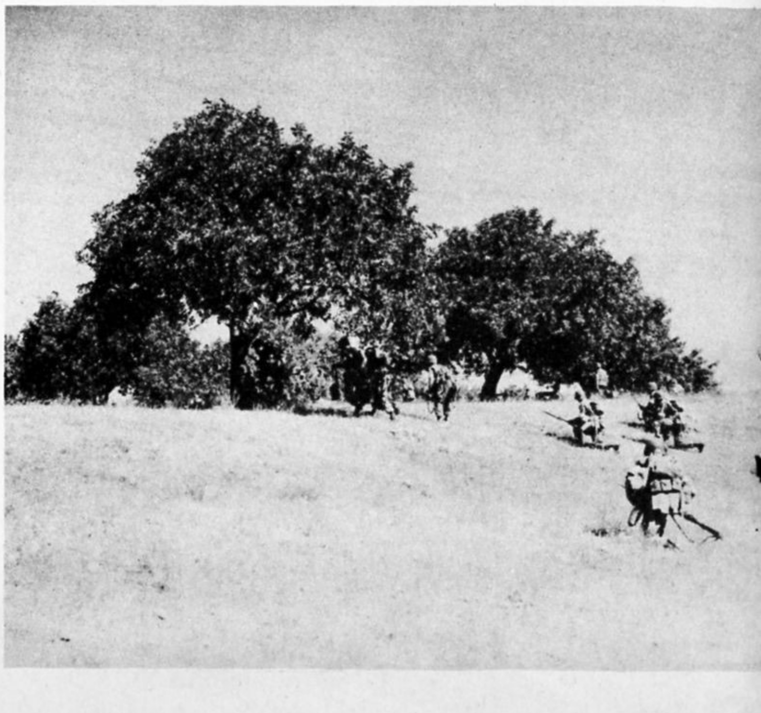
Out of the midnight sky came the Paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne: the first night combat jump in U. S. Airborne history.



A mortar squad sets up in an olive grove.

Enemy just ahead.

By dawn all troops were attacking.



The dusty road to Victory.

Enemy pillboxes were numerous and varied in construction.

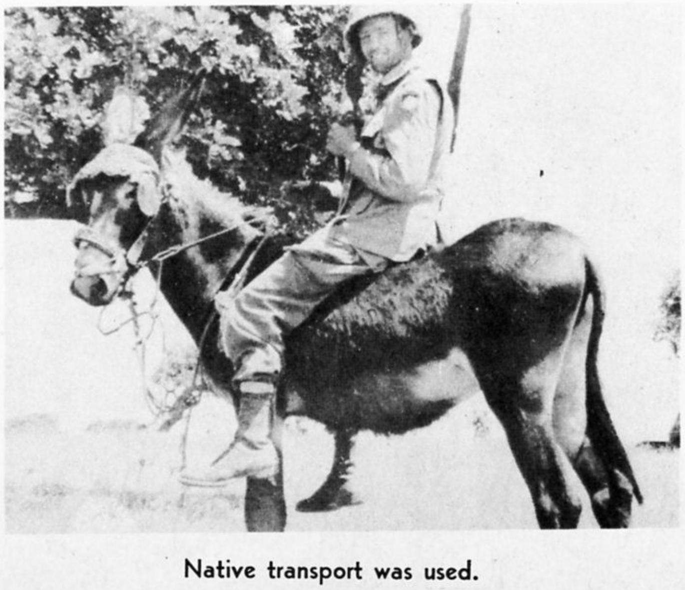
Stubborn Sicilian natives carried ammunition.

A communications section sights the enemy.

Paratroopers pose on their first captured German tank.

Captured German truck turned out to be V-8 Ford.

George Patton and Theodore Roosevelt—two Great American Soldiers who died in Europe, look over our gains in Sicily.



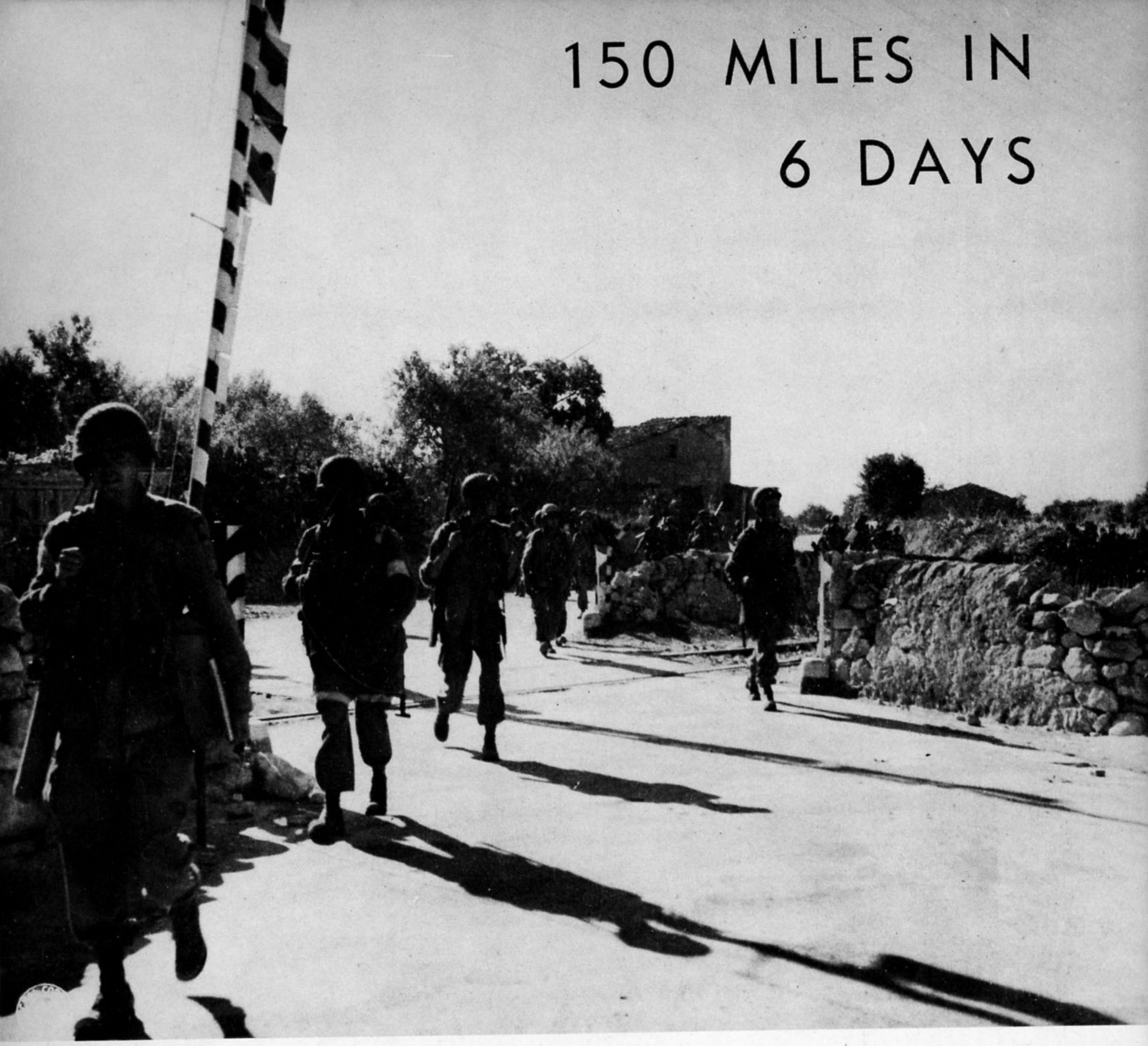
Native transport was used.

War Correspondents Rammond Clapper, Ernie Pyle, and Beaver Thompson.

Antitank gun captured in the first stages of the Axis route in Sicily.

Friendly civilians helped when they could.

150 MILES IN 6 DAYS

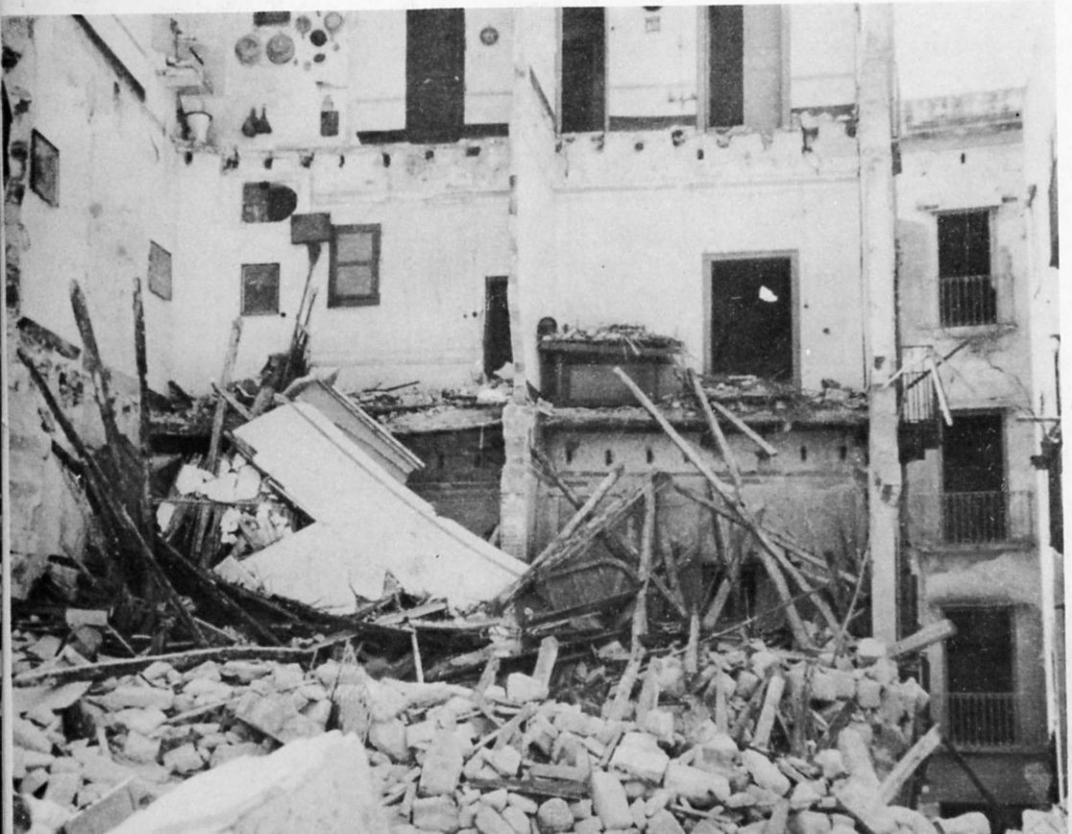


Giant pillboxes slowed us up.

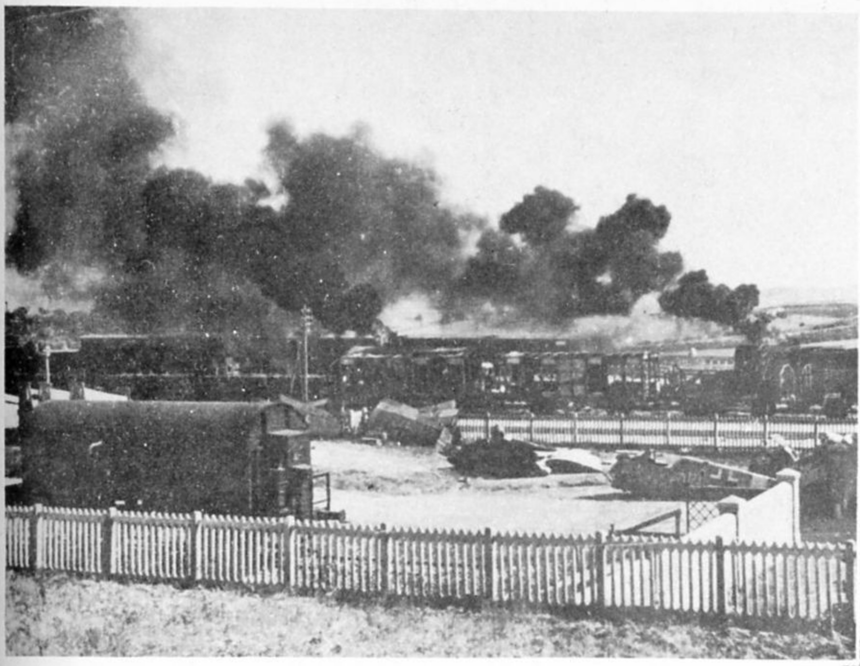
Siesta time in Sicily.

Above—Coming into Sciacca on the west coast of Sicily. Above right—Col. Gavin and War Correspondent Jack Thompson who jumped with us in Sicily. Right—Trucks shuttled the marching men wherever available. Below—General Ridgway and General Taylor discuss the advance. Below right—By every conceivable means of transportation the advance continued.

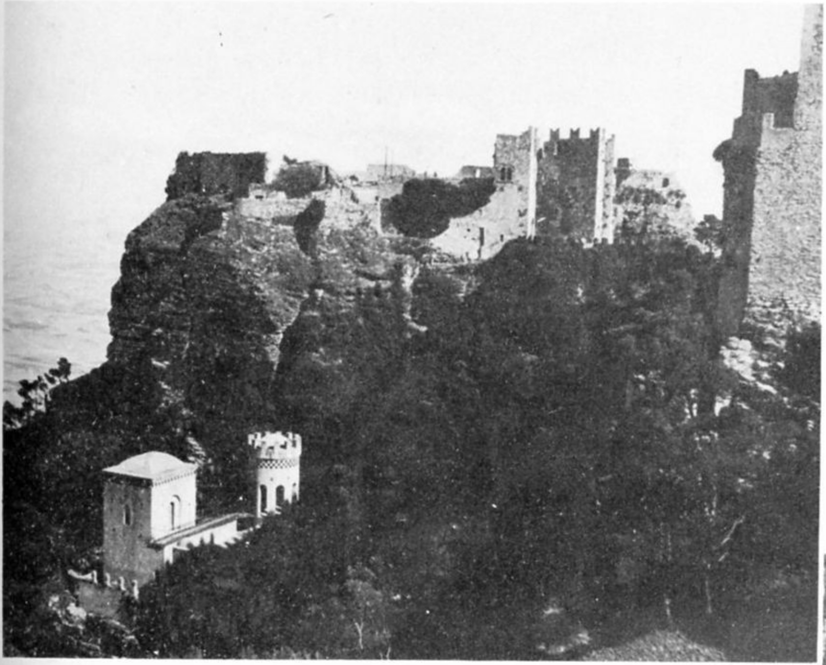
San Margarita — Gela, Vittorio, Comiso, Licata, Palma, Agrigento, Ribera, Castelvetrano, Trapani; Sicilian towns fell to the 82nd by the score.



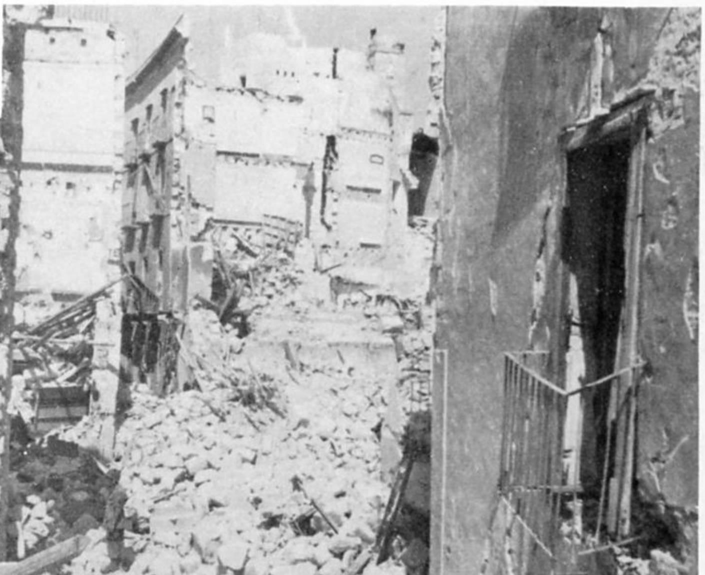
Pots and pans on a kitchen wall in Trapani.



Railroad yards at Erice-Napola burning after American attack.



Ancient castle on Mt. Erice was built before Christ.



Contrasted with the ancient ruins at Agrigento and Erice were modern ruins at the Trapani naval base.

The prisoners were mostly Italian. The Fascist Legions were surprisingly docile under the 82nd onslaught. After bitter fighting in the initial stages of the campaign, Il Duce's little men surrendered in droves. 23,000 gave up to the 82nd in Sicily.

AMERICAN CEMETERY, SICILY

ITALY

Anzio
Naples
Salerno

The second combat mission of the 82nd Abn. was begun at Salerno and ended at Anzio.

ITALY

NAPLES • FOGGIA • ROME • ARNO

WITH THE remnants of the Axis' Sicilian force pushed across the Strait of Messina into the foot of the Italian boot, the 82nd Airborne Division took part in an amazing series of plans and counterplans for following up the Allied victory with a quick thrust onto the Italian mainland.

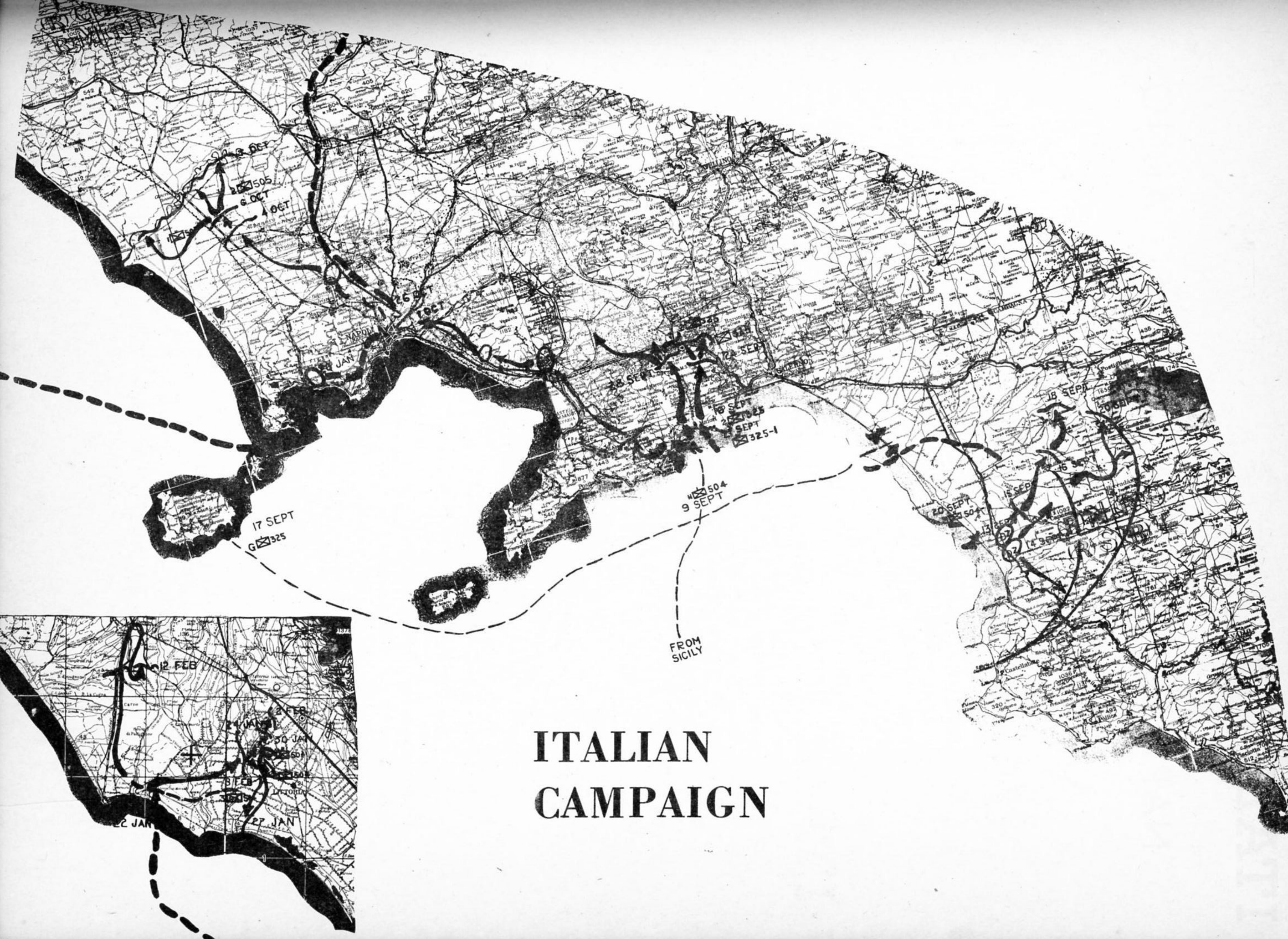
While the major portion of the division remained in Sicily, a planning staff was sent to Fifth Army Headquarters to coordinate arrangements for the first assault on Europe proper.

There were six different plans for an airborne mission in Italy. One plan called for a combat team to drop a force into the Volturno River sector with the remainder of the division in floating reserve, but that plan was discarded when the 82nd was given four days' notice to prepare to drop on Rome. The behind-the-scenes work done by the 82nd Airborne Division Artillery Commander, Major General (then Brigadier General) Maxwell D. Taylor, on his reconnaissance trip into German-held Europe, Italy and Rome, ranks with General Mark Clark's pioneering sneak into Africa as one of the most thrilling G-2 coups d'Etat in history. As Clark paved the way for D-Day in Africa, so Taylor paved the way in Italy. Not only did General Taylor save the lives of many of the men in the 82nd Division when he cancelled the premature Rome landing, but his conferences with Marshal Badoglio were instrumental in the Italian capitulation and armistice plans. The men of the 82nd were actually loading into the planes when word came from Taylor in German-held Rome that the mission must be cancelled. Taylor's conference with Marshal Badoglio had convinced him that the Italian government was in no position to give the assistance necessary for such a daring Airborne operation.

On the afternoon of September 13, 1943, Major General Ridgway left the CP by air to confer with Lt. General Mark W. Clark, commanding the Fifth Army, but was intercepted by radio when a courier from General Clarke's Headquarters arrived with a personal message calling for Airborne landings behind Allied lines on the Salerno beachhead. The Allied hold on the beach was precarious, and reinforcements were needed at once. The General called for troopers in the most urgent language.

That night, the 82nd's 504th Regiment Combat Team dropped on the beachhead. The next day, the 505th R. C. T. also dropped on the beachhead, and the 2nd Bn., 509th Parachute Infantry, then attached to the 82nd, dropped in the Avellino sector, disrupting defenses, reinforcements and resupply. The precarious beachhead was saved, but let us see how it was done by taking a look at the reports from the Regimental combat teams• involved. David Whittier reports the following action by the 504th Combat Team:

"It was not until the men were seated in the planes that the mission was disclosed. In probably the briefest briefing of any comparable operation of the war, men of the 504 Combat Team were informed that the Fifth Army beachhead in Italy was in grave danger of being breached; that the 504 was to jump behind friendly lines in the vicinity of the threatened breakthrough in order to stem the German advance. A pathfinder group was going in ahead with special equipment to guide the planes into the DZ, the center of which the Fifth Army was to



ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

3 OCT
505
6 OCT
4 OCT
26 OCT
1 OCT
NAPOLI
JAN
28 SEPT
22 SEPT
18 SEPT
1325
SEPT
325-1
504
9 SEPT
FROM SICILY
17 SEPT
G 325
18 SEPT
16 SEPT
15 SEPT
20 SEPT
504
13 SEPT
14 SEPT
12 FEB
2 FEB
24 JAN
30 JAN
504
3 FEB
LITTORIA
22 JAN
27 JAN

KÖLN
HERMANN VAS HIER !

ITALY

indicate with a large flaming "T." That was all; no one knew specifically what was to be required of him—nothing more than the fact that the Fifth Army was endangered and that the 82nd was needed badly. Each man felt an inward surge of pride in his importance. Morale climbed.

As the planes sped down the air strip and lifted into the night sky, these men felt that they had a big assignment ahead of them; the rescuing of the Fifth Army. Though some may have had misgivings about what the morrow would bring, they were confident in their strength and happy to be on the way.

Shortly after midnight, the planes passed over the clearly marked DZ and unloaded their human cargoes. With the exception of eight planes which failed to navigate properly to the DZ, but whose planeloads were subsequently accounted for, there was little difficulty or confusion experienced in completing the operation. Assembly was made in the designated areas with a minimum loss of time, and a later check revealed that only 75 men had suffered injuries as a result of the jump. This mission is still regarded as history's greatest example of the mobility of airborne troops—in exactly eight hours from the time the Division had been notified of its mission the 504 Combat Team was briefed, loaded in the planes and dropped over their assigned DZ. Landing at night, the 504 were in the front line, raring to go, by morning of the 14th.

The following night, Colonel Gavin led his 505 Combat Team into Italy and over the same drop zone. His account of the action follows: "On the night of the 14th, the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, with Company B of the 307th Airborne Engineers attached, landed by parachute on Paestum drop zone and was in place at daylight on the right of the 504th, holding the beachhead to the coast at Agropoli. Troops of the 505th were the first to contact the British Eighth Army in its advance northward.

I remember the feeling of apprehension found in every parachute combat flight, but there were so many details to take care of at the last moment in the Salerno operation, that I think it took our minds off the possibilities of another drop like that of Sicily. Take-off went off on schedule, which always gives you the feeling that things are starting well. It was a beautiful night, too, and shortly after we cleared the northeast corner of Sicily the Italian mainland came clearly into view off to the east. I went in in the lead ship of the 505th Regimental Combat Team. Not long before we reached the drop zone, we crossed a peninsula jutting out into the Tyrrhenin Sea. In the plane, the red warning light came on to tell us that we were approximately four minutes out from what we hoped, this time, was the correct drop zone.

We seemed to be flying over the peninsula forever, when a white beach and river mouth appeared. The scene now looked exactly as the photos of the correct drop area, and about that instant the green light flashed on. There was no burning "T" down there on the ground as planned. But the area appeared in every way to be the right one, so out we went.

The first chutes had barely opened when the great "T" did light up directly under us. To the Germans who occupied the hill at positions from which they could look down upon it, the operation must have appeared bizarre and incredible. (Ed. Note: Each leg of the "T" was ½ mile long and together with Very lights the spectacle of the fire lighting up the falling "chutes" was a spectacle which thrilled every soldier, allied or axis, within miles of the Sele drop zone.) The units began at once to reorganize, and they assembled without loss or interference, although far too many pyrotechnic signals may have been used. The combat team was in the front lines by daylight.

The accurate way in which this landing went off on schedule increased immeasurably the confidence of the troopers in their own commanders and staffs and in the troop carrier command.

The airborne troops had a decisive influence on the final outcome of the Salerno operation as a whole. At a moment when the scales of defeat and victory were in balance, the weight of the airborne reserves tipped them to the side of victory. By airborne action, reserves over two hundred miles from the scene of combat, separated by unfriendly seas and land, were committed to decisive action within twelve hours of receipt of orders. The implications of this were plain. The airborne troops had a mobility and striking power that no high commander could overlook in the future. Correct and timely commitment and exploitation of such forces could turn the tide of battle."

In contrast to the smooth sailing on the Salerno drop were the 509 landing around Avellino.

Avellino is a small mountain town about 20 miles from the Salerno beaches which controlled important road junctions between the beachhead and German forces retreating before the British 8th Army to the south.

There were no suitable drop zones near Avellino, but the 509 troopers set out with confidence as they left Licata, early on the night of the 14th. These were the same Veteran Paratroopers (2nd Bn. 509th Parachute Inf.) who had jumped in North Africa after a 1,500-mile flight from England in 1942. The mountainous terrain was such that Avellino was obscured by ground haze and looked like any other small mountain town from the high altitude at which the mission had to be flown. Very few planes found the actual drop zone and the Bn. was spread out over more than one hundred square miles. They blew bridges, mined roads, cut telegraph lines and ambushed German patrols and messengers. The battalion Commander was dropped in a German tank park where he engaged in a fire fight, only to be wounded and taken prisoner. This tragedy was typical of the entire operation.

Despite the wide dispersion (510 of 640 men that dropped eventually wandered back to Allied lines some remaining three weeks behind enemy lines), the effect on the Germans of the Avellino drop was considerable. Jittery about further airborne action, the German command kept more troops deployed for preventive and corrective action against Parachute drops than there were Airborne troops available for commitment by the entire allied command. German troops, so deployed, were not available for use at the critical and decisive action on the Salerno beachhead.

Concurrently with the landings of the 504, 505 and 509 Combat Teams, the 325 Glider Infantry, reinforced with the much traveled Third Battalion, 504 Parachute Infantry, was sailing to Salerno by boat. To the Glidermen of the 325, who had grown cynical as mission after mission was cancelled, this was at last a chance to prove their fighting value alongside the parachute elements of the Division. At 8 o'clock the night of September 13th, they sailed from the Harbor at Licata, landing near Salerno late the night of the 15th, from where the 3rd Battalion, 504, joined its Regiment at Albenna, and the 325 moved into operations on the Sorrentine Peninsula. "On the morning of the 16th, the 504th marched four miles to occupy the town of Albanella where, at noon, Colonel Tucker issued to the battalion commanders the order to seize and hold the high ground surmounting Altavilla.

The days following were, in the words of General Mark W. Clarke, commander of the Fifth Army, 'responsible for saving the Salerno beachhead.' Men of the 1st and 2nd Battalions advanced across the flat valley floor, were subjected to intense enemy artillery and small arms fire; contact between the battalions and the CP group were lost, but all units pressed relentlessly forward and in spite of overwhelming enemy superiority in numbers, took the reassigned objectives. The enemy counterattacked stubbornly, and on the night of the 17th it became evident that help had to be secured if the 504, now completely cut off from friendly forces, was to hold these key positions so necessary for the security of the beachhead.

General Dawley, commander of the Sixth Corps, was contacted by radio, and suggested that the regiment withdraw and attempt to establish a line nearer to the beach. It was then that Colonel Tucker uttered the statement that epitomized the saga of Altavilla — "Retreat, Hell! — Send me my other battalion!" The 3rd Battalion was then sent to rejoin the regiment. They moved into position on Hill 344; the 1st and 2nd Battalions repulsed strong enemy counterattacks; contact between the units was made, and the Salerno beachhead was saved. The next day the 504 was relieved by elements of the 36th Division.

The area in the region of Altavilla for several years had been a firing range for a German artillery school; consequently there was no problem of range, deflection, or prepared concentrations that the enemy had not solved long before the advent of the Americans. Needless to say, hostile artillery and mortar fire were extremely accurate and capable of pinpointing with lethal concentrations such vital features as wells, trails, and draws. During the three days that the 82nd occupied the several hills behind Altavilla, approximately 30 paratroopers died, 150 were wounded, and one man was missing in action.

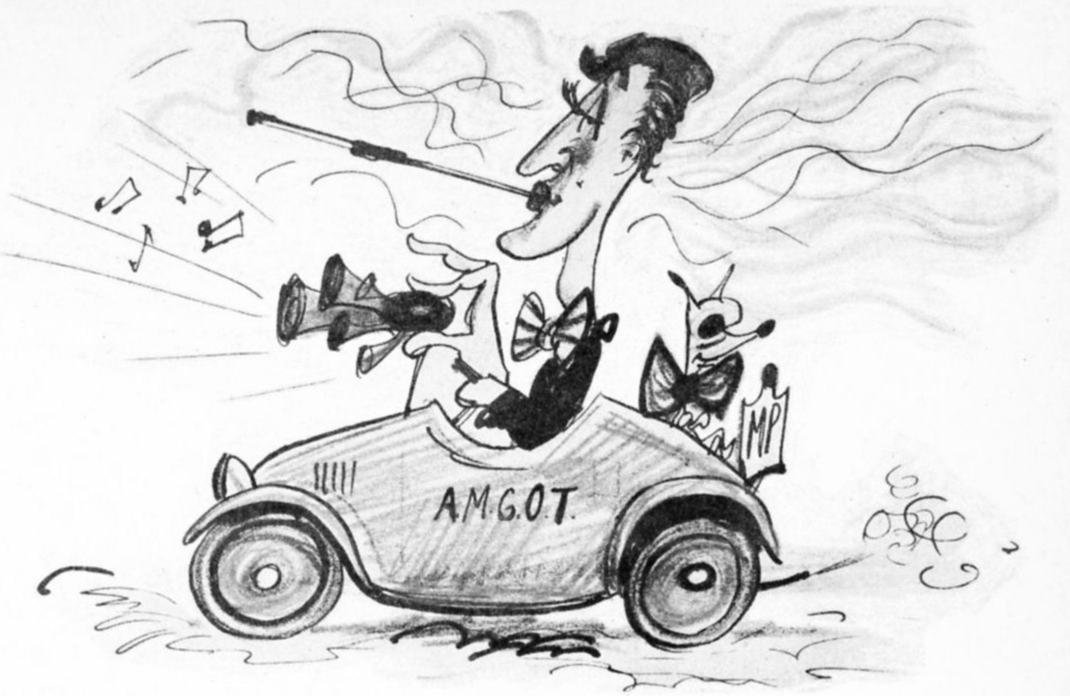
The majority of these casualties were caused by the enemy's artillery fire. Enemy casualties were, judging from the number of dead left on the field of battle and from information divulged by prisoners, several times those of the troopers. Four separate and distinct attacks by the enemy, launched from the north, east and west of 504 positions, were driven back with heavy casualties resulting for the Germans.

Capture of Altavilla and Albanella allowed the Fifth Army to move northward toward Salerno and Naples.

F Company of the 325th moved out by sea and occupied the island of Ischia, off the Bay of Naples.

The 82nd pushed northward by boat and landed in the tiny town of Maiori, clutching precariously to the base of abrupt mountain cliffs lest it fall into the sea. Fighting with Colonel Darby's famed Rangers and supporting British heavy guns, the 325 R. C. T. and 3rd Bn. 504th pushed the Jerries from the commanding mountain tops at Mt. San Argela and Chiunzi Pass, where H Company, 504 and the 319th Glider F. A. Bn. had been holding out with the Rangers since the first stages of the Salerno Campaign. The remainder of the 504 Regimental Combat Team joined the elements fighting at Maiori, after a short rest, and took up positions at Chiunzi Pass on the 25th of September. Terrain

No matter where you went in different countries, there was always an individual who had a car and rode everywhere while everybody else walked. If you asked for a lift he would look at you in a horror stricken manner as if you had insulted him.



in this sector was precipitous and hilly, with plenty of concealment provided by underbrush and trees. All evidence of the enemy was confined to the valley, which stretched like a vast carpet below — the Valley of Naples. Even in the Valley there was little, aside from an occasional truck movement or a gun flash, to be seen of the Germans. Positions were occasionally shelled, particularly that portion of the road that wound around the mountain and came out in full view of the German guns located at the base of Mount Vesuvius, some ten miles to the front. This outlet was known as Chiunzi Pass—but because of trigger - happy German artillerymen, was promptly renamed "88" Pass by 82nd men. By September 26, the "All American" stood poised on the high ground overlooking the Naples plain, gateway to the first large European city to fall to the Allies.

On September 29, the 505th was attached to the British 23rd Armored brigade and moved toward Naples. The next day, 82nd 505 men and Division Reconnaissance elements led ground elements into Naples, the first major city to capitulate in Axis Europe. The 504th, with the British Tenth Corps, skirted the base of Mt. Vesuvius, by passing Naples. On October 1, the Allies marched victoriously into Naples. In the vanguard marched the 82nd Airborne Division, the first ground troops to enter the city. They were met with wild enthusiasm by the demonstrative Italians, and only light rear-guard German opposition.

To the conquerors went the spoils, and the 82nd was given the mission of policing Naples — a pleasant assignment after Sicily and Salerno, for in October and November, 1943, it was no longer "See Naples and die," for the first major European city in Allied hands was emerging from the valley of the shadow of death. To troops who had spent long months of monastic life in North Africa, and long nights and days of fighting, Neapolitan life — however paled by war — had its charms. They also enjoyed brief holiday excursions to Vesuvius, Pompeii, and the famed Isle of Capri.

The "All American" helped to nurse the city back to life; saw its power and water services resumed; watched its shops open again; aided in patrolling and preventing food and water riots; "Sweated out" German air raids, booby traps and mines. One explosion rocked the Post Office across the street from a C. P., killing many civilians and soldiers. Another hit the 307th Engineer building.

During the division's stay in Naples, the 505th again was attached to the British and given a ground-infantry mission of pushing northward to the Volturno River. The 505th swept northward from

ITALY

October 3 to October 9 with British Armor, cleared the Germans from the flats and canals near the Volturno, moved up to the river and held its southern bank. Patrols of the Regiment were the first troops to cross the river.

The 82nd Division, less the 504th, the 376th Field Artillery Bn., and elements of the 307th A/B Engineers, left Naples in November for a new station in northern Ireland.

The elements of the division composing the 504th combat team were kept in Italy with the Fifth Army temporarily, at the request of Lt. General Clark.

On October 29th before the rest of the 82nd had left Italy, the 504 launched its epic attack through the mountains of Central Italy that was to carry them 22 miles ahead of the Fifth Army on their left, the Eighth Army on their right. Driving north toward Gallo, in a battle that proved for the most part to be one of physical stamina interspersed with sharp patrol engagements, the 504 crossed the Volturno, entered the rail and road center of Isernia, cleared Colli, Macchia, Fornelli, Cerro and Rochetta, and 15 men from H and I Companies doggedly fought their way through mine fields to reach the summit of Hill 1017 — the Fifth Army objective and key point of the entire sector.

All supplies in this advance were of necessity carried by men and mules, since jeepable roads were non-existent.

On this mission, almost without exception, combat was restricted to small local engagements between patrols over a broad front. The terrain was such that no distinct front line, either enemy or friendly, could be designated. German patrols operated behind our "lines," and the same thing was true of 82nd patrols to an even greater extent. It is in this type of warfare that the 504 proved itself to be the unequivocal master of the enemy; there were few encounters, even when the Germans had the advantage of numerical superiority, that the enemy didn't come out second best. Trained to fight in small independent groups, in the technique of scouting and stealth, and for stamina and perseverance, the paratroopers proved the value of their specialized preparation for combat.

Next, the "All American" of the 504

The U. S.
Merchant Marine

received orders to move forward for an assault on Mt. Sammucro and the adjacent hills beyond Venafro — positions that dominated the gateway to the German stronghold of Cassino.

On the rainy cold evening of December 10, 1943, the regimental CP was established at Venafro. Companies G and I of the 3rd Battalion moved immediately forward to relieve elements of the 3rd Ranger Battalion, who were in position on Hill 950. While advancing to relieve the Rangers, I Company became subjected to enemy small arms fire and, in the midst of a German counterattack, managed to take up their assigned positions. The next twelve hours found the Germans counterattacking seven times in force, and although I Company had suffered 46 casualties by noon of the following day, they still held the position.

The following morning, the 2nd Battalion completed the difficult climb up Mt. Sammucro (1205) to take up positions formerly occupied by the 143rd Infantry. The remainder of the 3rd Battalion joined G and I Companies and continued to repel repeated enemy counterattacks. 307th Airborne Engineers laid a mine field in the draw between Hills 1205 and 950. Enemy artillery increased in intensity to a degree unprecedented in the Italian campaign — it became quite evident that the Germans were determined to regain these heights at all costs.

The 1st Battalion, supposedly in reserve, was used for litter-bearing details, and to carry food, water, and ammunition up the rocky, heavily-shelled trails to the troops clinging stubbornly to positions on the heights.

By December 20th, the 504th CT was holding Hills 1205, 950, 954, 710, and 687, with patrols operating on Hills 877 and 610. The fighting of this operation consisted of the assaulting of one hill after another. It was an uphill fight all the way, characterized by rock and tree bare, 45-degree slopes, and unusually stubborn resistance by the enemy. Supply and evacuation of the wounded was a matter of back-breaking work. The medic's task, at best a difficult one, was increased tenfold on the high, craggy, windswept, and shelterless hill tops. Medical supplies were short when they were needed most, and there was no quick way of obtaining more. Casualties had to be carried on stretchers down to the road — a painful six-hour journey. Mule trains were able to carry supplies to a certain point, after which it became necessary, because of the increased angle of ascent, for all supplies and ammunition to be transported up the summits by carrying parties of men. This work was carried out over heavily-shelled trails, with supplies always reaching the units engaged just in time.

During the 19 days that the 504 was in action near Venafro, they suffered a total of 54 dead, 226 wounded, and 2 men missing in action. These figures are exclusive of the 376 FA Battalion and Company C, 307 Engineers, each of whom suffered dead and wounded. Most of the casualties were the result of enemy artillery fire, which was, as has been mentioned, intense.

However high the number of these casualties may seem, compared to those of the enemy they must be considered light. Information revealed by prisoners (51 were taken) indicated German dead and wounded to be at least five times greater than those suffered by the 504. On December 27, the regiment was relieved of duty in the Venafro sector and was moved to new bivouac areas in the vicinity of Pignatoro where a belated Christmas and quiet New Year's was spent. On January 4th, the troopers were ordered to their old stamping grounds, Pozouli, a suburb of Naples. Operation Shingles and Anzio were on the way. Shingles called for dropping the 504 Regimental Combat team, in a vertical envelopment of the enemy, astride the main north highway 8 miles inland from Anzio on the night of the Anzio invasion. The mission was to prevent German reinforcements from moving into the Anzio — Netuno area. The 504 combat team was to be reinforced by 50 gliders carrying reconnais-

La Questura

sance jeeps and anti-tank guns.

Colonel Tucker, directed to conduct active reconnaissance upon landing, planned to push strong motor patrols north, beyond Field Marshal Kesselring's command post, and on into Rome.

If the capabilities of the 504th in this situation can be gauged by its performance in combat throughout Italy, it would almost certainly have entered Rome. But this is pure speculation, for at the last moment the operation was called off, and the combat team was landed from the sea and not the air. Airborne participation in the Anzio operation is just a fine problem for the Monday morning quarterbacks, though I think that airborne troops could have been used gainfully and perhaps even decisively in their chief role.

Dawn of the 22nd found the 504 standing off shore from the beach, from which they were to debark on the Anzio beachhead. Through the loud speaker of a neighboring boat, Colonel Tucker was ordered to land the Combat Team on Red Beach. Immediately, the 13 LCI's that contained the members of the regiment commenced to move toward the shore. There was no confusion; everything was proceeding with the regularity and order of clockwork. The lead boats were grinding into the sand. Already the ramps had slammed down into the water, and men were splashing their way toward the shore. It was perfect. The operation couldn't have gone more smoothly. The only thing that was lacking to make this a perfect movie operation was the enemy.

At that precise moment, the tense stillness was shattered by a whining roar that left no doubt in anyone's mind as to its source. Straight out of the sun the enemy planes came — their machine guns blasting. For a few brief seconds the world became one great kaleidoscope of raging sound, then the planes were gone, and in the water where they had passed over lay several boiling circles where bombs had struck. One LCI, its nose disgorging men, settled in the shallow water. Its after-section was a mass of twisted metal and oily black smoke. Men could be seen hanging from the bits of twisted steel. That had been LCI number 20—G Company's craft.

The landing craft continued to come, unload their personnel, and back out into the water, while the German dive bombers returned again and again. The paratroopers ran down the ramps and jumped into the surf. Some went in to their knees, some to their waists, and some went in over their heads and swam for the shore. And all the while the German planes continued to roar in from the sun to bomb and strafe. The shipborne anti-aircraft units sent up a terrific barrage, but nobody in the 504 was watching for hits—they were too busy getting ashore and seeking cover.

Two days later, the regiment was ordered to the right flank of the beachhead, where they took up positions along the Mussolini Canal.

Near bridge number Five, Lt. Col. W. R. Williams, commanding the 1st Battalion, ordered B Company to attack the Germans in that vicinity. After an unsuccessful attempt to take the bridge, a platoon of A Company was committed, along with a platoon of tanks. Four hours later, with the aid of tanks and 57mm guns manned by the 376, the enemy was pushed across the canal, and bridge number Five was secured.

In the vicinity of bridge number Two, Lt. Col. L. G. Freeman, commanding the 3rd Battalion, committed I Company to clear the sector. The company was ambushed, however, and forced to take up defensive positions. At dawn of the 24th, I Company, now reinforced by a platoon of tanks and naval gunfire from the sea, counterattacked frontally while G and H Companies brought the enemy under cross fire from the flanks. Two hours later, the enemy, after suffering 69 killed, 25 wounded, 33 taken prisoner, two half-tracks knocked out and one captured, was driven back to the other side of the canal. 504 casualties were two men killed, three wounded, and none missing.

Following days found the regiment pa-

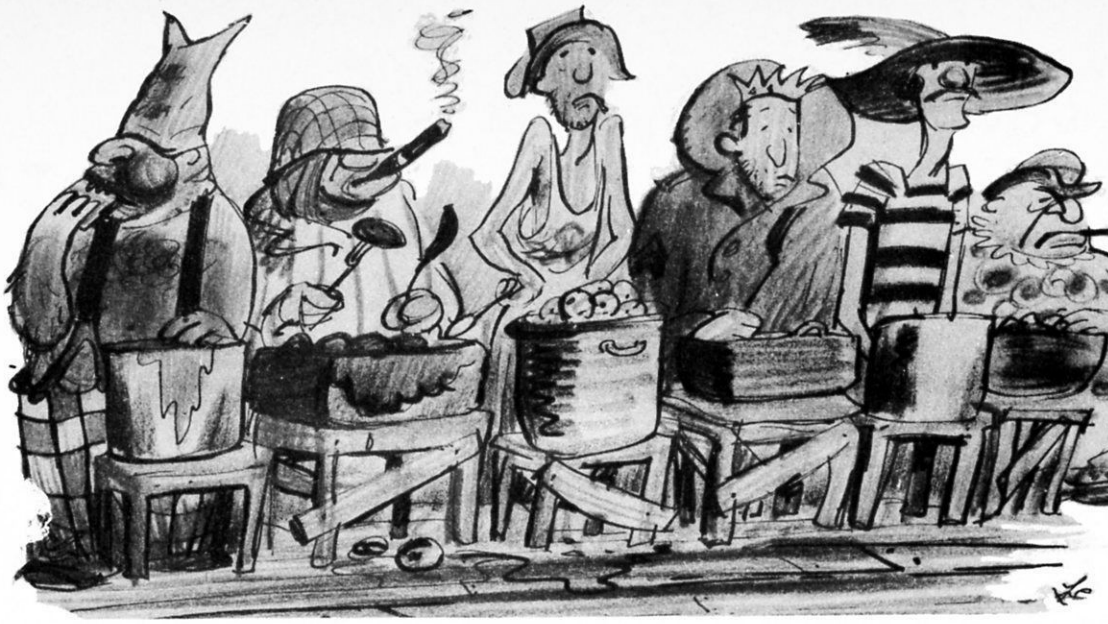
trolling actively and consolidating its line along the Mussolini Canal. It was then decided to attack the town of Borgo Piave, an important road center that came to be known as the "spider," because of the five main roads that joined in the city.

At 1330 on January 25, all three battalions moved out in the attack. The 1st Battalion attacked Sessano, the 3rd Battalion Borgo Sabatino, and the 2nd Battalion made the main drive for Borgo Piave. The 3rd Battalion attained its objective and pushed strong combat patrols to the North and East, supported by naval gunfire. The 1st Battalion encountered stiff opposition and heavy enemy artillery fire. Nevertheless, a small group of C Company men did reach the objective—Sessano. The 2nd Battalion, supported by a rolling barrage, reached Borgo Piave and D Company and pushed 200 yards east of the town. However, the enemy counterattacked with an armored force of about five tanks and eight flak wagons and isolated D Company from the remainder of the battalion. Upon order from the Third Division, the 2nd Battalion withdrew to the Mussolini Canal, leaving behind a strong combat outpost and several tank-hunting teams. D Company, after suffering heavy losses, subsequently infiltrated through the enemy's encirclement and regained their own lines.

As a result of these operations, the regiment had gained outpost positions on the other side of the canal but, generally speaking, had not advanced any appreciable distance — the MLR still remaining along the Mussolini Canal.

After several days of holding and attacking along a front extending from bridge number Five south to the sea, the 504 was relieved in this sector by the 179th Infantry. The 3rd Battalion was attached to the First Armored Division and sent to the Northern (British) flank of the beachhead, while the remainder of the Combat Team was sent north of bridge number Five to participate in an attack scheduled to take place in the Third Division sector.

The 3rd Battalion, after several days in reserve with the First Armored Division, was committed with the British First (Guards) Division in the Carreceto sector. German artillery fire in this area was unusually intense, and it was here that the enemy launched his main drive to push the beachhead into the sea. After one of the heaviest artillery barrages ever experienced by 504 men, the Germans began their attack in the early hours of February 5, 1944. On successive days, British units were cut off from the 3rd Battalion, which was forced to withdraw to the famous "factory" in Mussolini's wonder-town of Aprilia. Enemy railroad guns and dive bombers then concentrated their efforts on the 3rd Battalion garrison. The paratroopers suffered severe casualties, and by the time enemy infantry moved in, the companies had been



Chow Line

reduced in strength to between 20 and 30 men.

Fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued, in which the paratroopers, by sheer determination and courage, were able to repel repeated German onslaughts. Rather than remain in the exposed positions in which they now found themselves, they withdrew to a railroad underpass several hundred yards behind the "factory" and established defensive positions. H Company was ordered to attack and attempt the rescue of a British general who had been captured. After bloody fighting, they recaptured the general, only to find themselves cut off from friendly forces. I Company was then ordered to attack and make contact with H Company. The 16 men remaining in the company carried out this mission successfully, and a semblance of order was restored to this sector—the backbone of the German attack had been broken. It was for this outstanding performance in the period 8-12 February, that the 3rd Battalion was given one of the first Presidential Citations in the European Theater of Operations.

The remainder of the Combat Team, meanwhile, had been engaged in heavy fighting in the Third Division sector. On January 30, the 1st and 2nd Battalions jumped off in an attack that was to take them to the Cisterna River. The 1st Battalion led the way and encountered only light resistance as they passed through the German outpost line. Soon after, however, as they neared their first bridge objective over the Mussolini Canal, they were engaged by strong enemy forces. The reserve company was committed and the enemy driven back across the stream, first blowing the bridge behind him and thus saving the paratroopers the trouble.

While the 1st Battalion was consolidating its gains, the 2nd Battalion advanced along the left flank of the 1st Battalion and, under similar circumstances, were engaged by the enemy in the vicinity of a bridge farther upstream. Here again, the enemy was forced to retreat across the canal, after blowing the bridge behind them. The 2nd Battalion continued the attack to the north on the heels of the retreating Germans, who proceeded to blow another bridge — this time it was the bridge crossing the Cisterna River. The loss of this bridge denied the paratroopers any further support from friendly tanks, a factor which caused the 2nd Battalion to halt its advance and dig in on the far side of the river.

Much enemy material in the form of halftracks, 75mm howitzers, small arms, and vehicles was either captured or destroyed in this attack. Eighty prisoners were taken with very heavy casualties inflicted upon the enemy. 504 losses were comparatively light.

For the remainder of their eight-week stay on the Anzio beachhead, 504 men found themselves confronted with a defensive situation, rather than offensive for which they had been trained. With the exception of the first week of fighting on the beachhead, no appreciable advance was made by our forces. It was strictly trench-type warfare, characteristic of the First World War. For the first time, 504 men were digging dugouts and living in them for weeks at a time; barbed wire entanglements and mine fields in unusual depth covered all areas where the enemy might conceivably tread; alternate positions were prepared for any eventuality, and there were times when such an eventuality did not seem too remote. All in all, this was not the type of combat for which the paratroopers were psychologically suited. In fact, it was absolutely contrary to the way that they had always been taught to fight, and so it was with something more than the usual enthusiasm that the men of the 504 received the order to embark from Anzio, on March 23, for the trip to Naples.

As the LST's loaded with paratroopers, got under way, the Germans were dropping shells into the harbor, as though in some final frantic gesture to keep the 504 from leaving; like a murderer's last stab at his executioner. This had been a costly campaign for the 504—but ten times as costly for the enemy. During the eight-week period, 120 paratroopers were killed, 410 wounded, and 60 missing in action. Many lessons had been learned at Anzio, and many men had been lost. It was a good place to bid farewell. On April 10, the 504 landed in England to join the rest of the 82nd, now hard at work preparing for a 4th big D-Day, this time in Normandy.

General Mark Clark, Commander of American forces in Italy, at the time the 82nd served there, expressed his evaluation of the 82nd Airborne Division in the following statement released from his headquarters as Supreme Commander of the United States Occupation Forces in Austria: "I recognized the potentialities of a top-flight division when the 82nd Airborne joined my command for intensive battle training in North Africa during the early summer of 1943. In September of that year elements of the Division parachuted on the plains of Salerno and contributed materially to securing our initial beachhead on the continent of Europe. When, at Anzio during the Spring of 1944, it became necessary to utilize elements of the 82nd Airborne to take their place in the line on a ground role, they demonstrated their versatility by their record of superior performance in cooperation with veteran ground divisions. Well done, 82nd Airborne."

The Great Story of Gen. Taylor, and Italy's Surrender

One of the most thrilling G-2 Coup d' Etats in World War II was performed by 82nd Artillery General Maxwell D. Taylor. The 82nd was to jump near Rome the night of the beach landings in Italy. Italian authorities had guaranteed support in the daring operation but Taylor and General Ridgway were suspicious of the Italians ability to provide adequate assistance. It was finally decided that linguist General Taylor should go to Rome and contact Marshal Badoglio personally. On Sept. 7 General Taylor and Col. Tuder Gardiner left Palermo for Axis Italy. They were met off Ustica Island by an Italian corvette which took them to the Seaport of Gaeta. Roughing themselves up so as to appear prisoners, the two Americans were shouldered past unsuspecting guards by their Italian accomplices and into a waiting car. After a hazadous ride through hostile territory, road blocks, German sentrys, and innumerable other obstacles, Taylor reached Rome and Badoglio. At the American's insistence the aged Marshal was roused out of bed for a late conference. Taylor's worst fears for lack of adequate Italian support were confirmed. After a series of frantic radio code messages, the 82nd was halted at the Sicilian airports even as the paratroopers were loaded into the planes ready to take off for a mission which would have spelled disaster and annihilation. But the safety of the 82nd while important was not Taylor's only concern in Rome. Although unauthorized by Supreme Allied Headquarters to concern himself with diploma-

TRANSLATION

of Badoglio's message on opposite page

Given changes in situation determined in dislocation and existing German forces in the Roman zone. It is no longer possible to immediately accept an armistice because it would provoke occupation of the Capital and a violent assumption of the Government on the part of the Germans. Operation Giant Two is no longer possible because we lack forces to guarantee airports. General Taylor is disposed to reenter Sicily to present the views of the Government and attend to orders.

BADOGLIO.

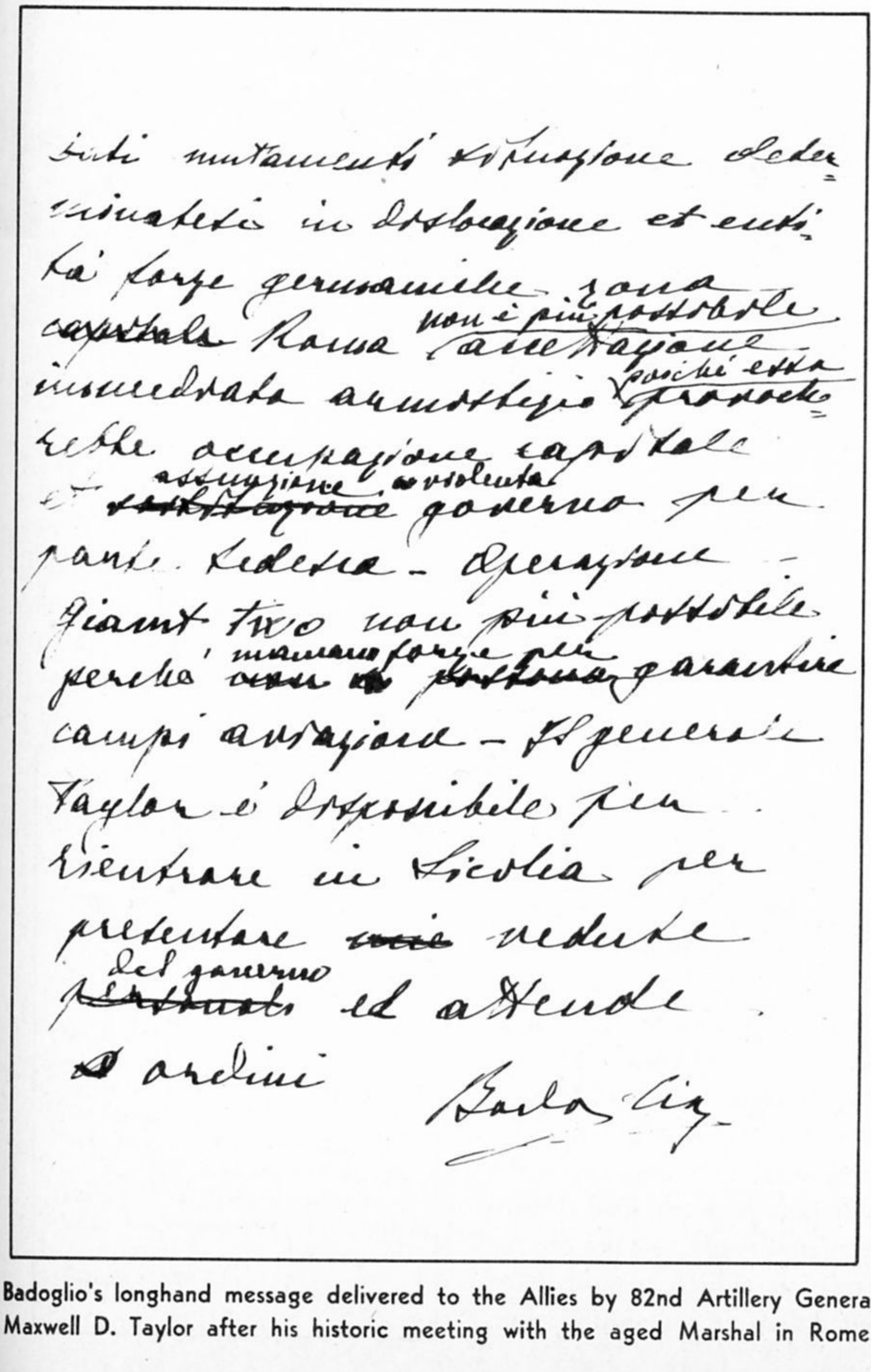
tic matters, Taylor found himself, a mere Division Artillery Commander, embroiled in the Italian surrender plans. Timed to coincide with the beach landings at Salerno, the Italian armistice was of great military as well as diplomatic importance. Now Badoglio pleaded that an armistice would bring terrible German reprisals against the Italian Capital and pleaded for a postponement. The future of the Italian campaign was at stake and Taylor acted as quickly and decisively as possible with his limited powers. He insisted Badoglio immediately draft a message to General Eisenhower for wireless transmission. Wireless conditions were extremely bad. September 8th had been the proposed day of the armistice and Badoglio's and Taylor's messages arrived in the nick of time on the 8th. The Airborne mission for that night was canceled at 1630.

Sitting through an American bombing Taylor and Gardiner waited instructions in hostile Rome.

Finally orders came to return, with them went General Rossi, Deputy Chief of the Italian General staff who was to plead the Italian case before General Eisenhower. The trip to the airfield provided one of the biggest thrills of the trip. The little Italian truck was halted to allow the passage of a detachment of marching troops. The 2 uniformed American officers tried to melt into the shadow of their seat as the chilling sight of a column of German soldiers passed within arms reach of the car.

When the troops had passed, the little truck plowed on dodging American fortress bomb craters and climbed aboard a 3 motored Savoy-Marchetti for the trip back to Africa.

Taylor, Gardiner and their Italian friends arrived in Algeria to find General Eisenhower had announced the Italian surrender to the world as planned 1/2 hr. before. To everybody's surprise Badoglio confirmed the announcement 1 hr. later in a broadcast to the Italian people. Little did the men of the Eighty-second realize at the time how closely they had been entwined in the meshes of pending disaster. Had Taylor been captured or killed before he arrived in Rome, the entire course of the war might have been unavoidably altered.



Dati mutamenti situazione deter-
minatesi in dislocazione et enti-
tà forze germaniche zona
~~capitale~~ Roma non è più possibile accettazione
immediata armistizio poiché esso provoche-
rebbe occupazione capitale
et ~~[illegible]~~ assunzione violenta governo per
parte tedesca – Operazione
Giant two non più possibile
perché ~~[illegible]~~ mancano forze per garantire
campi aviazione – Il generale
Taylor è disponibile per
rientrare in Sicilia per
presentare ~~[illegible]~~ vedute
~~[illegible]~~ del governo ed attende
~~[illegible]~~ ordini

Badoglio

Badoglio's longhand message delivered to the Allies by 82nd Artillery General Maxwell D. Taylor after his historic meeting with the aged Marshal in Rome.

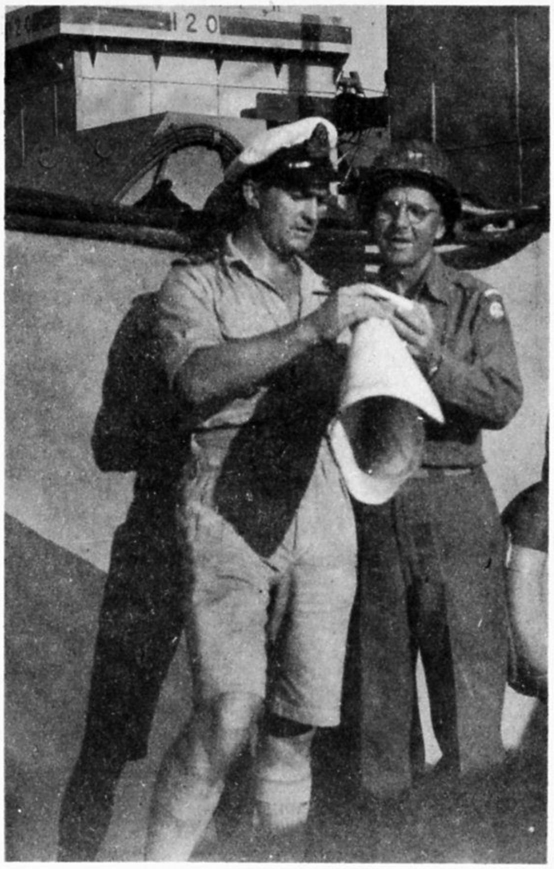
ITALY—the jump

After numerous dry runs and canceled missions, the troopers were skeptical until they actually climbed aboard for Salerno.

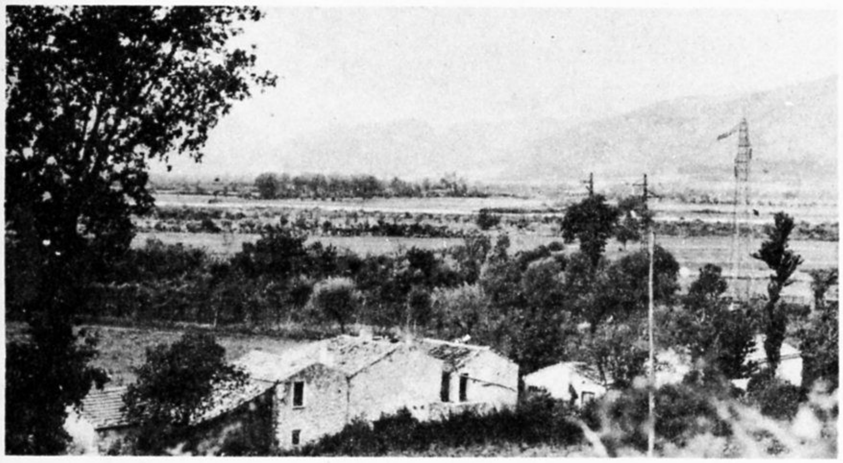
As the last rays of daylight dimmed into dusk the 82nd 504 Rgt. was winging its way toward Salerno.

The skys over the beachhead were filled with parachutes as the much needed reinforcements came out of the sky to save Salerno.

ITALY—
Salerno



The late Col. Harry Lewis
brought his 325 R. C. T. in by boat.



On the mountain ridge in the background an intense artillery duel was in progress.

Manpower is always cheap in a war and equipment is vital.

Enemy artillery was terrible at Altavilla — our own gunners kept their barrels hot returning fire.

Mortar men played a big role in support and defense.

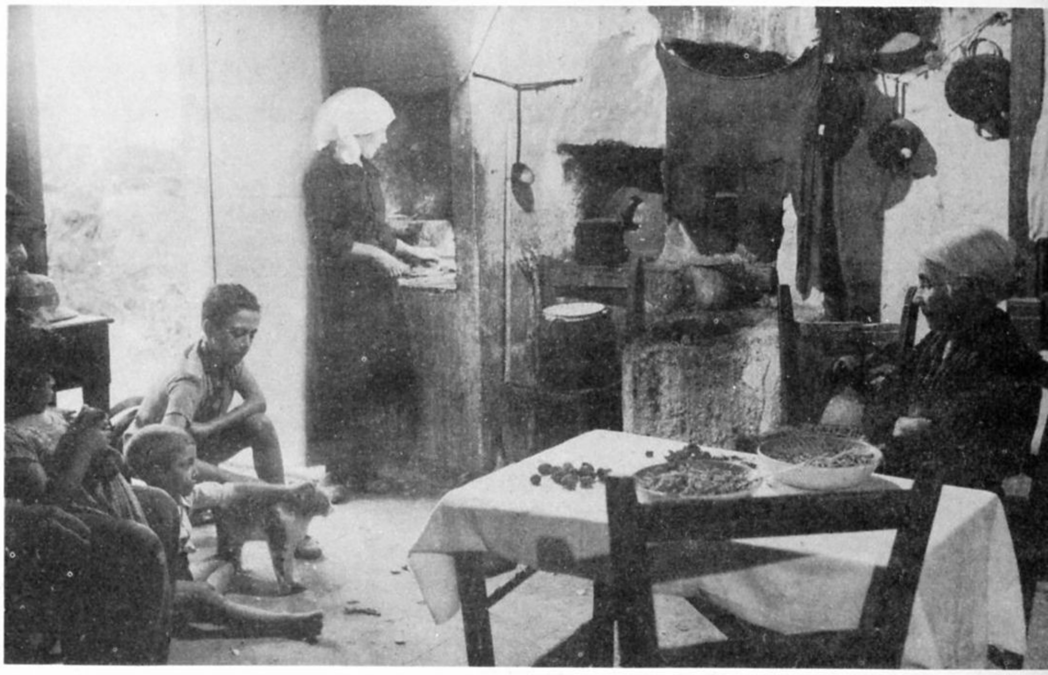
ITALY—Salerno

The ruins of the Ancient Roman Empire were viewed with pleasure by Allied Armies as they conquered modern Italy.

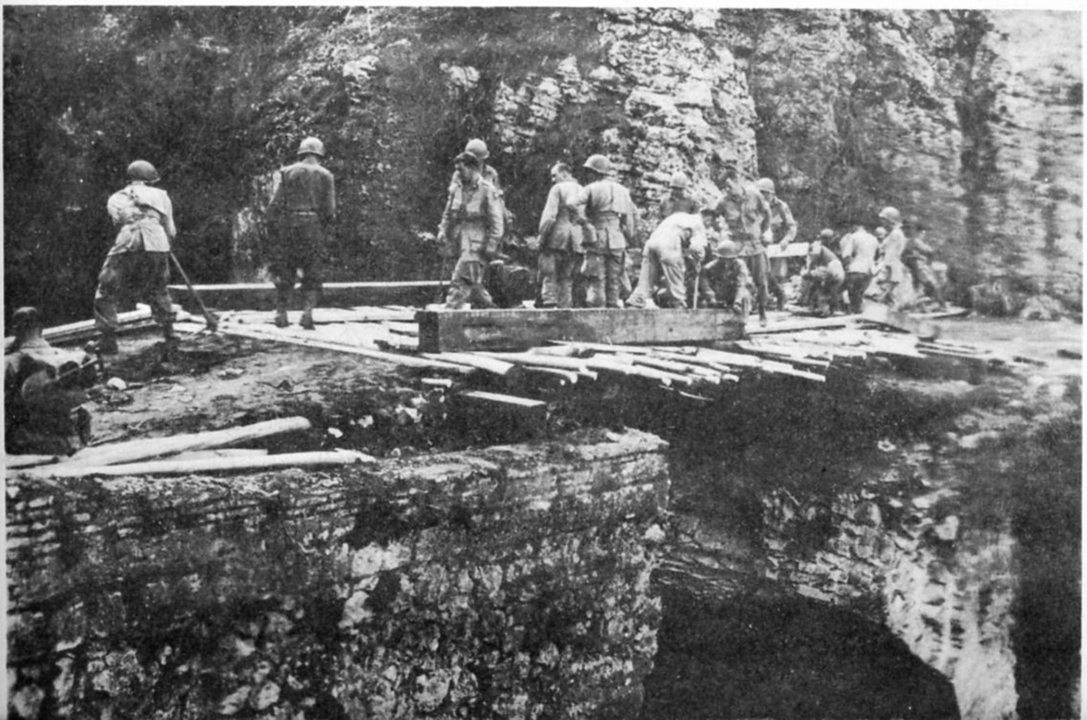
Picturesque towns rested in the hills along the Mediterranean coast of Western Italy.

A wary trooper cleans the enemy out of farm houses in Italy.

The smaller towns all looked alike in Italian Advance.

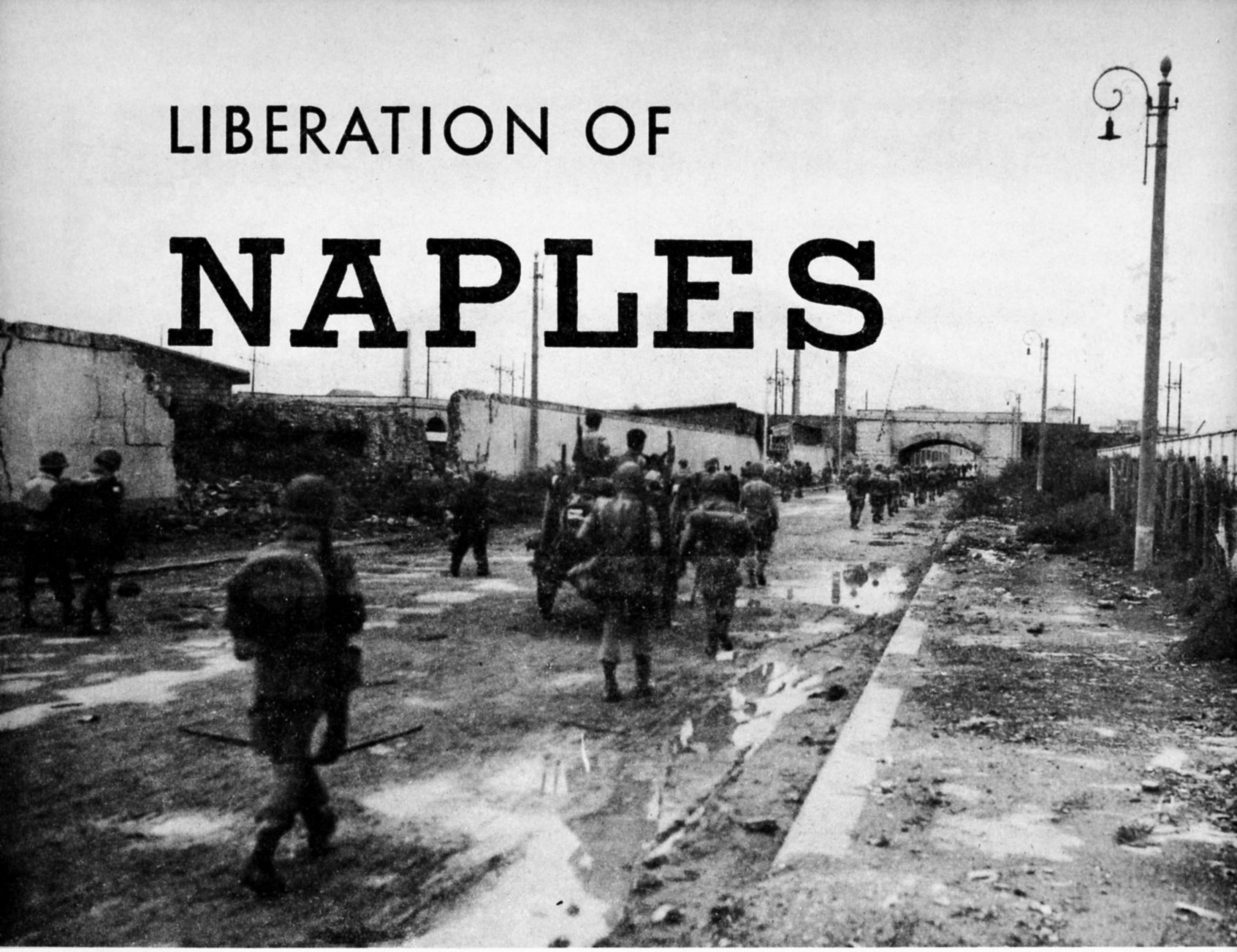


Peasants in Italy lived in their kitchens. Here many a spaghetti dinner was traded to a hungry trooper for a K. Ration.



The 82nd 307 Airborne Engineers repave a Nazi-blown bridge with scrap wood so that trucks and tanks can get at the enemy.

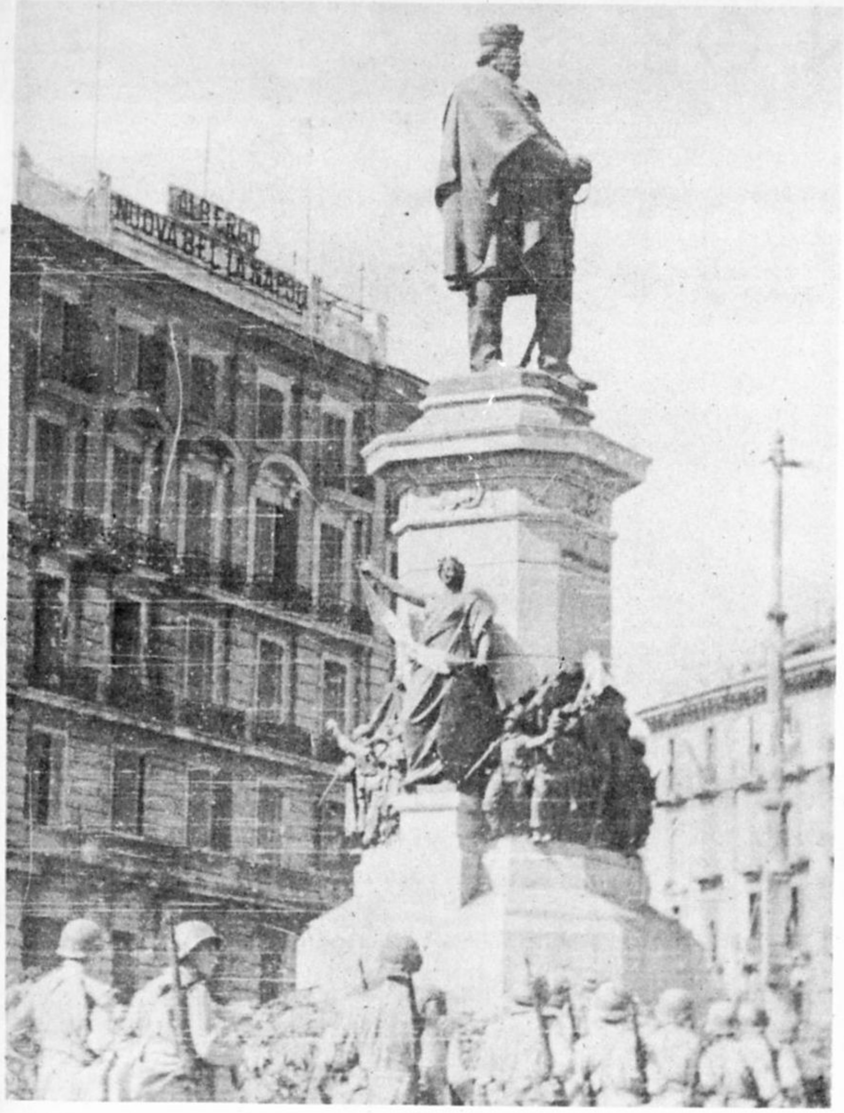
LIBERATION OF NAPLES



The Eighty-second Liberates Europe's First Major City.

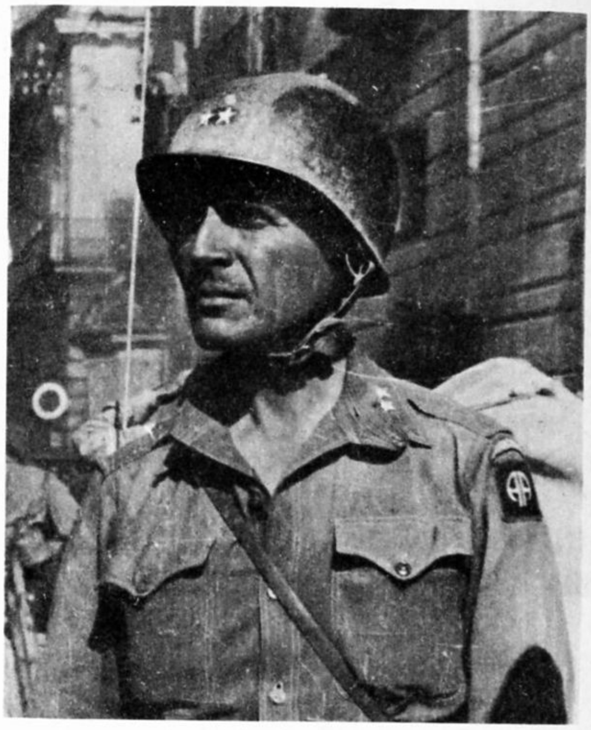
British Armor reaches the city limits and rolls into Naples.

82nd's General Ridgway and 5th Army's General Clark enter Naples with forward elements of the Eighty-second 1st troops into the city.

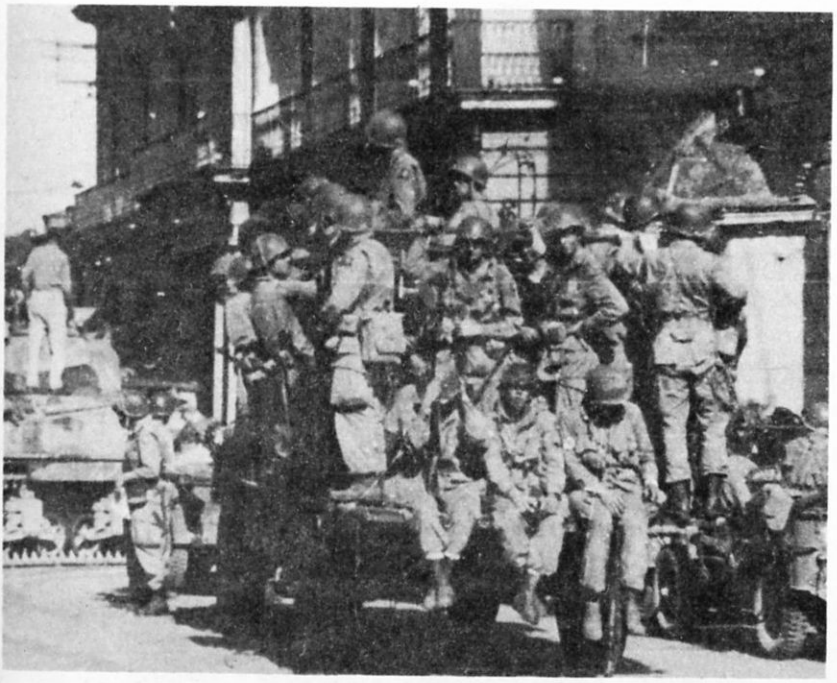


Liberators pass Liberateur—The 82nd in Garabaldi Square passes the old gent himself—Italy's most famous soldier.

Street Conference — British Tankers and American Paratroopers in Naples.



Matt Ridgway in Naples.



Troops pour in for what would prove to be a very pleasant occupation.

This 1st flag into Naples would also be first to fly over Free France — Ste. Eglise June 6, '44

NAPLES
Italy

General Ridgway explains the set-up in Naples to Field Marshal Alexander and General Mark Clark.

82nd troopers as well as Italian civilians were killed and wounded in the tragic explosion of a German time bomb in the Naples post office.

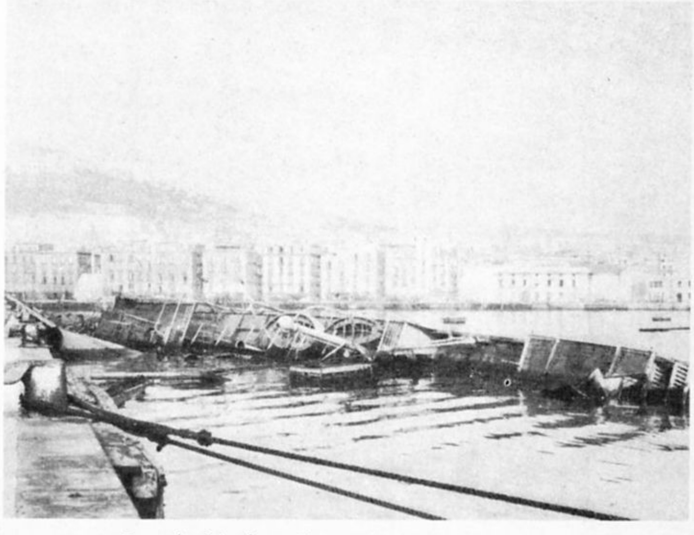
Five in one Rations and other supplies were unloaded from cargo ships in the harbor.

A crowd gathers outside the Naples post office following the explosion.

Clean up after the Naples post office disaster.

The Telephone Building and many others were bombed by Allied and Axis.

German Dive Bombers appeared often scattering debris in the wake of their bomb load.



Scuttled Italian Ships clogged the harbor.

Vesuvius spewed smoke behind the harbor in Napoli.

Olive skinned Signorinas were delightful escorts after veiled Arabs.

Vino party in a liberated cafe.

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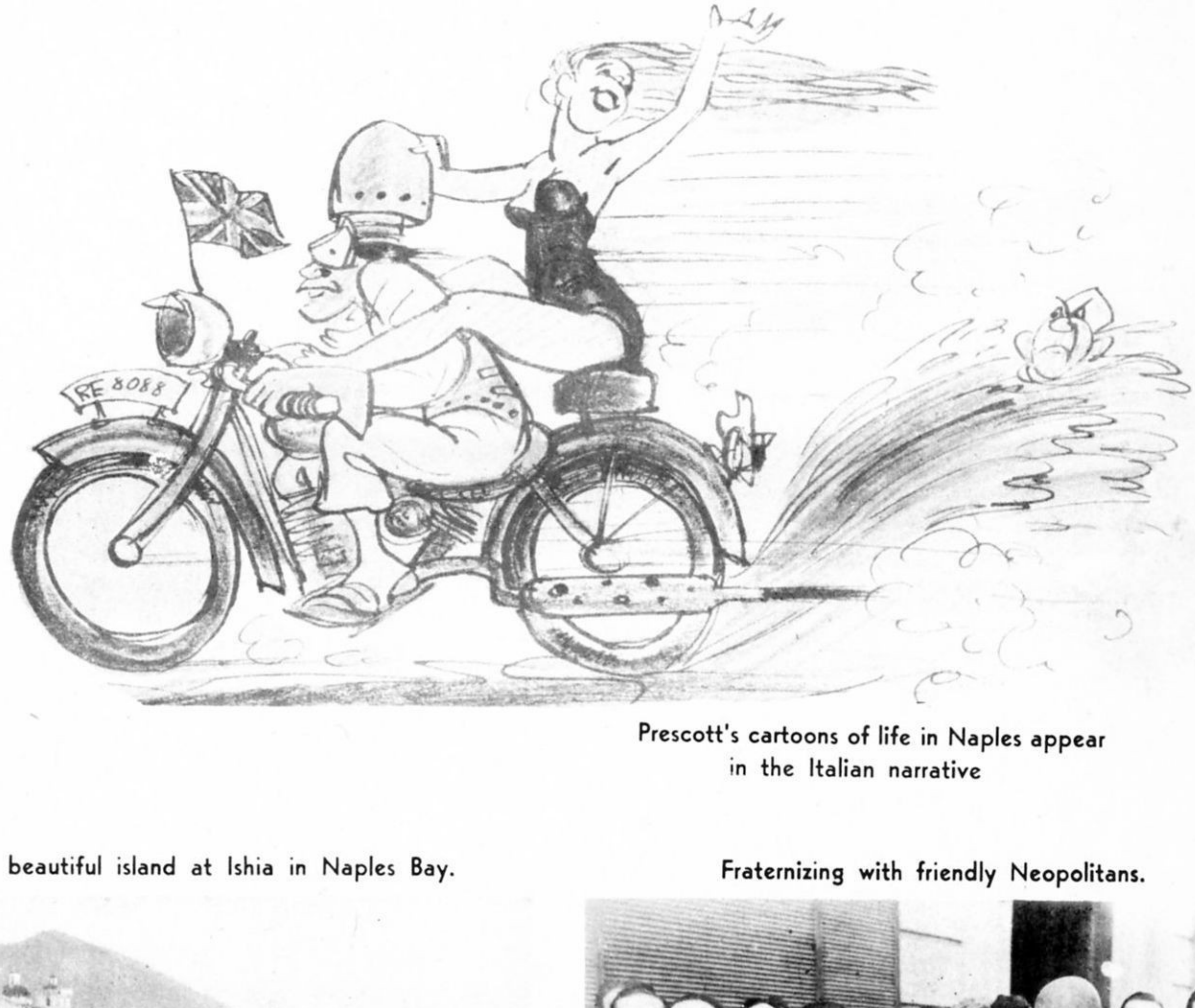
Time out to propblast a new general.



Prescott's cartoons of life in Naples appear
in the Italian narrative

The beautiful island at Ishia in Naples Bay.

Fraternizing with friendly Neopolitans.

ANZIO

"American parachutists—devils in baggy pants—are less than 100 meters from my outpost line. I can't sleep at night; they pop up from nowhere and we never know when or how they will strike next. Seems like the black-hearted devils are everywhere . . ."

—found in the diary of a German officer who opposed the 504 on the Anzio beachhead.

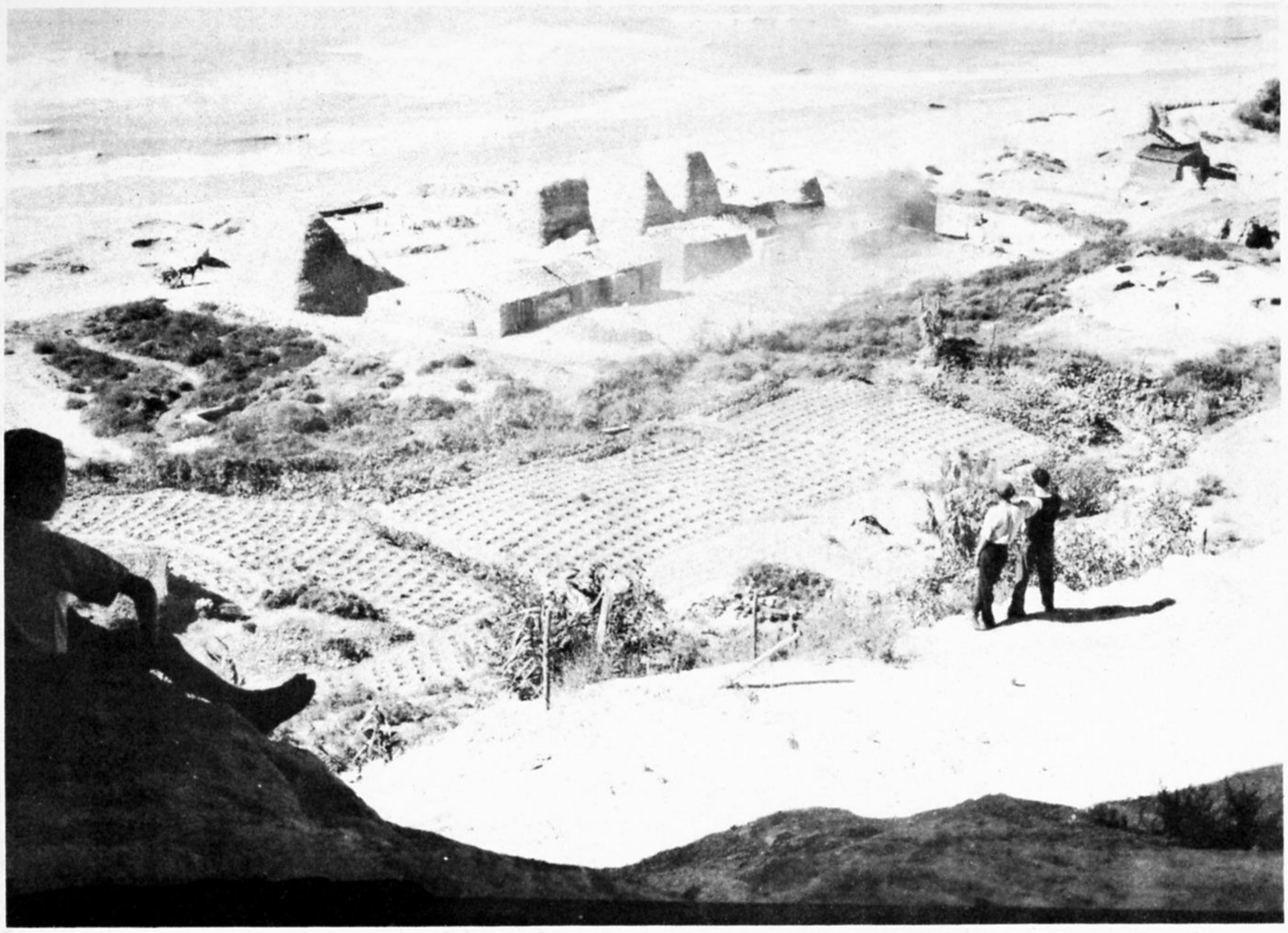
Minefields are swept by the Engineers
as Ducks land on the Beachhead at Anzio.

Sleeping German.

Troopers of the 504 wring out their wet clothes after wading ashore.

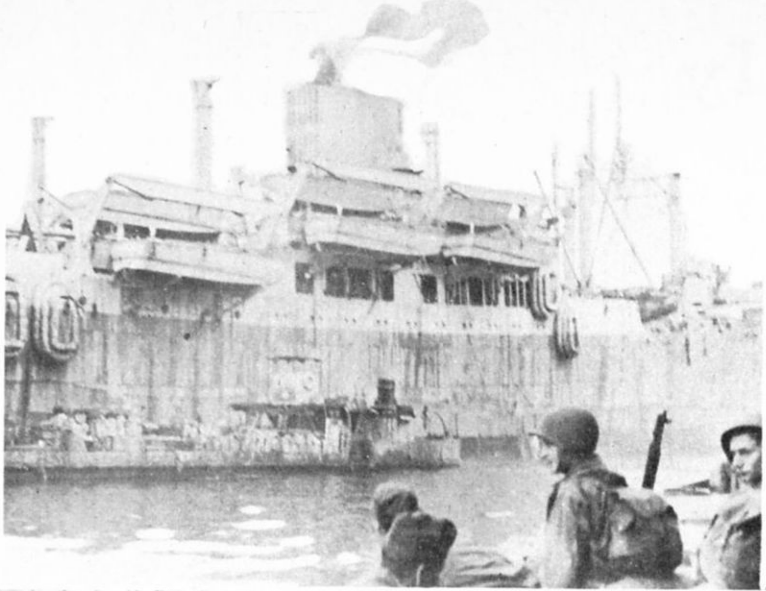
Footborne 82nd troopers pass riddled German cars near San Pietro.

ANZIO, Italy

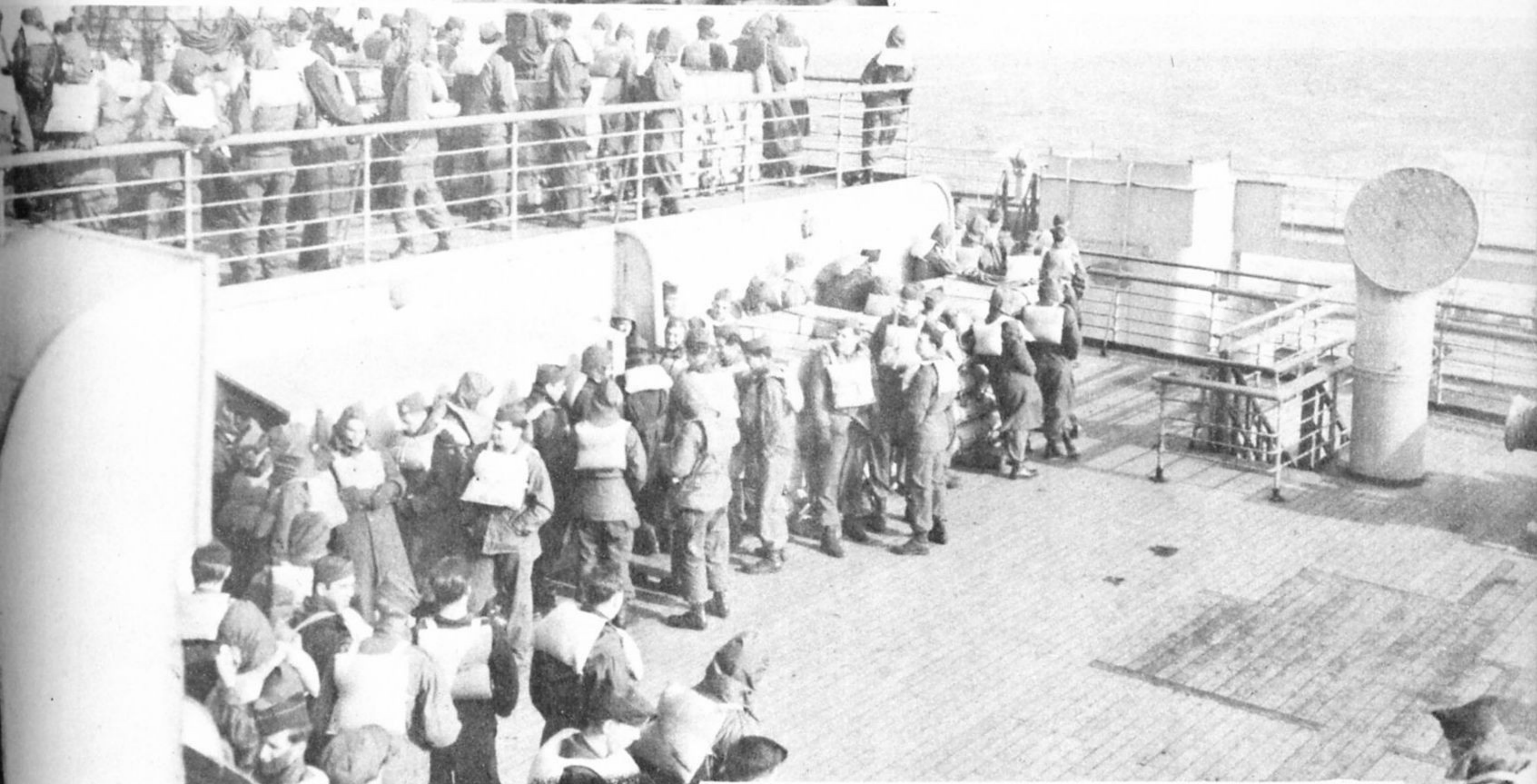


Before the battle started the Italian coastline was peaceful and primitive.

Mules were used wherever possible to carry ammunition and supplies over the mountain terrain.



Good-by Italy



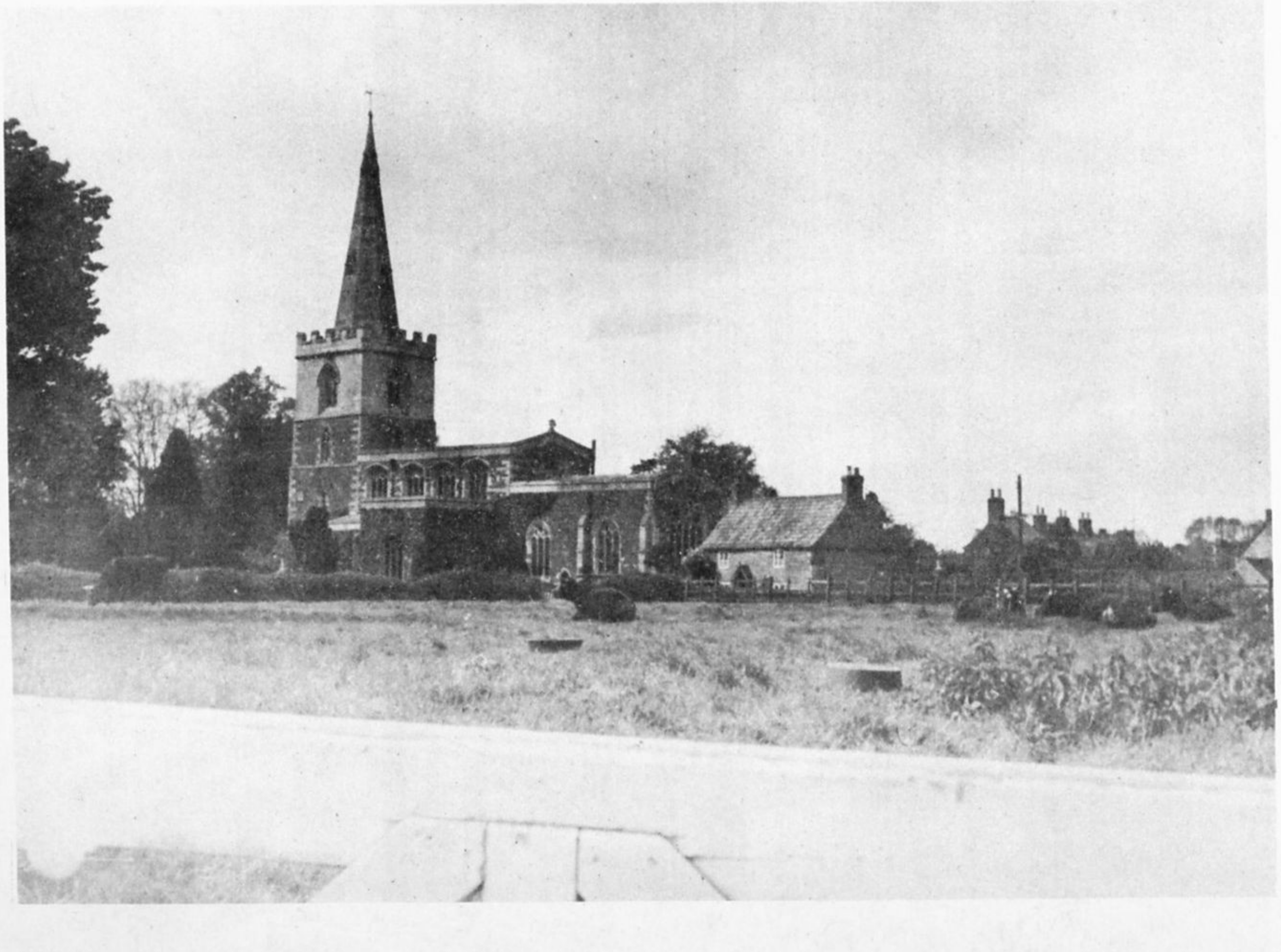
All Aboard for Ireland

the UK

IRELAND AND ENGLAND

CASTLE DAWSON . . . Cookstown . . . Leicester . . . Quorn . . . Nottingham . . . Ashwell . . . Market Harboro; and the Pass to Belfast . . . London . . . or Scotland. An Oasis between battlefields, where troopers rested from Sicily and Italy, trained for Normandy and Holland. A country, like home, where people spoke the same language and liked the same pleasures. A country as proud as our own, steeped in the enchantment of tradition—a land which, like our own, had not been overrun by Nazi hoards. Yet, here too were lessons to be learned—lessons of diplomacy and fraternity and learning to respect each other's customs—the favorite Pub, center of social life in the community group; bitters or beer; lorrie or truck; limey and yank; "any gum, chum?"; fish and chips, several months away from the strains and stresses of combat—a second home to come back to after Normandy—dances, with girls for everybody; Penny Shilling, Bob, Quid, Pound, "Thrupney bit" and "Haypenny"—the expensive seats are in the Balcony, and the Orchestra is cheaper—tiny railroad freight cars to facilitate economical loading and unloading on short hauls, and always, "Won't ya have a spot o' tea, nite?", the friendly offer extended by every English household to the boastful, bragging, but good natured Yank, who liked and was liked despite himself.

All this was England. Here too, the 82nd, rejoined by the 101st, trained for the two biggest Airborne Invasions in history—the all important D-Day, minus landings during the night of June 5-6th in Normandy, and the spectacular Nijmegen, Arnhem, Eindoven jump in Holland, the 1st large scale daylight Airborne operation in history. British Paratroopers figured too, the 6th Division in Normandy and the 1st in Holland at Arnhem. The Red Berret, symbolic of the British Paratroopers, even as the polished jump boots are to us, was seen more and more by our troopers. Through their



boxing matches and other contests an International Allied Airborne, Esprit de Corps was built up.

In August, 1944, the Division lost its Commanding General. Through every day of combat from Sicily, Italy and Normandy, Major General Matthew Bunker Ridgway had led the 82nd "All American" Airborne first into Airborne combat and never an inch lost in three grinding, grueling Airborne campaigns. That was the "All American" Division's record under Ridgway, and now he was being promoted to a Corps Commander, 18th Airborne, the first American Airborne Corps, under Lt. General Brereton's new 1st Allied Airborne Army. Another precedent was going by the boards. British, American, Polish and French Units, with Airborne veterans from virtually all the European United Nations, made up an individual Army under duo Anglo American Command.

Lt. General F. E. M. Browning commanded the British Parachute Corps and was soon to command the action in Holland; youthful Brigadier James M. Gavin became commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Ridgway and his staff had left the 82nd, but we would see them again as we fought under their corps in the final three campaigns in Europe.

"Meet you at the clock tower," was the watchword when troopers from the little camps spread out around Leicester would climb aboard a double deck bus to join a girl friend or a buddy after hours. The troopers looked good with their Purple Hearts, combat badges, campaign stars and shiny jump boots. Many a girl rode her bicycle several miles into town for the dances at the Palais de Dance, Textile Hall or Grand Hotel. Leicester days were happy days for the 82nd, and the English. We marched side by side with them in their "Salute to the Soldier Week" parade. They invited us to their concerts at de Montfort hall. Their A. T. S. girls played in our Musical Comedy "Together We Sing," which played to full houses in London as well as Leicester.

It was in England, too, that the 507 joined us for the all important Normandy campaign, and the 508 began its long association with the Division, which lasted through Normandy, Holland, France and the Bulge.

In Leicester, General Eisenhower thanked us for all we had done and tactfully predicted that he would probably be thanking us again for more. Here also lived and died the ill-fated Belgian jump. We were to jump behind the Germans, cutting off their retreat by seizing and holding all bridges and crossings on the Escaut River, but a constant downpour in England gave us the wettest dry run in history as the rapid German withdrawal and allied advance outran four successive plans.

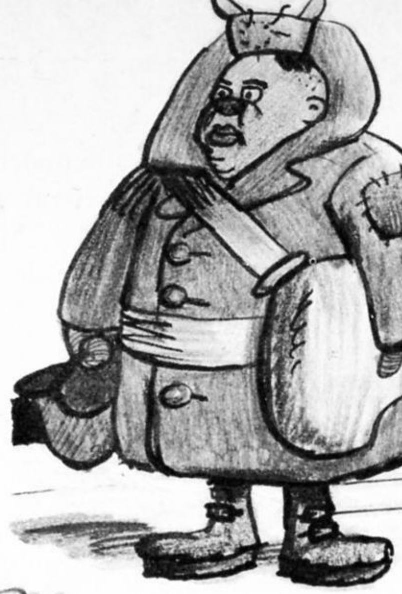
In England, the Glidermen first received their pay increase and Wings, symbolic of equality with the Paratroopers they fought beside. A Jump School trained replacements, and veterans practiced jumps for the D-Days to come. Training was intense, but the rolling hills and green fields of England were as pleasant as the African desert had been repulsive, and evenings were cool and society gay. England wasn't home, but it was the nearest thing to it in a long time, and the men liked it. Many married English girls, and very few of us didn't reluctantly leave some close British friends when the Holland invasion took us away from Leicester for the last time.

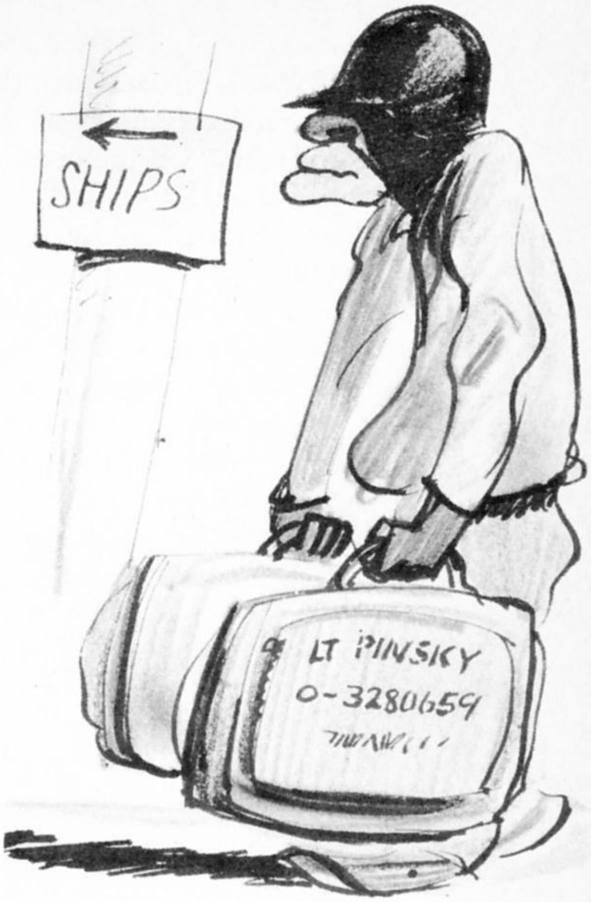
Some of us got back on pass or returned via Southampton on our way home. Others came to school at Oxford and Cambridge under the I&E Program.

London, during blackout, and again with the lights on after V-E Day—Westminster Abbey—Grosvenor Square—Willow Run—those quaint taxi cabs—Limehouse—and Picadilly Circus; all places and memories we'll never forget. The bicycles and Bobbie—street walkers—servicemen—from every country and walk of life—a conglomerate of uniforms, every size, shape, creed or color—all gathered on one little island and mingling in its great international city. That is England—our home for 9 interesting months.

That Cold winter in IRELAND

depicted by
Linzee Prescott

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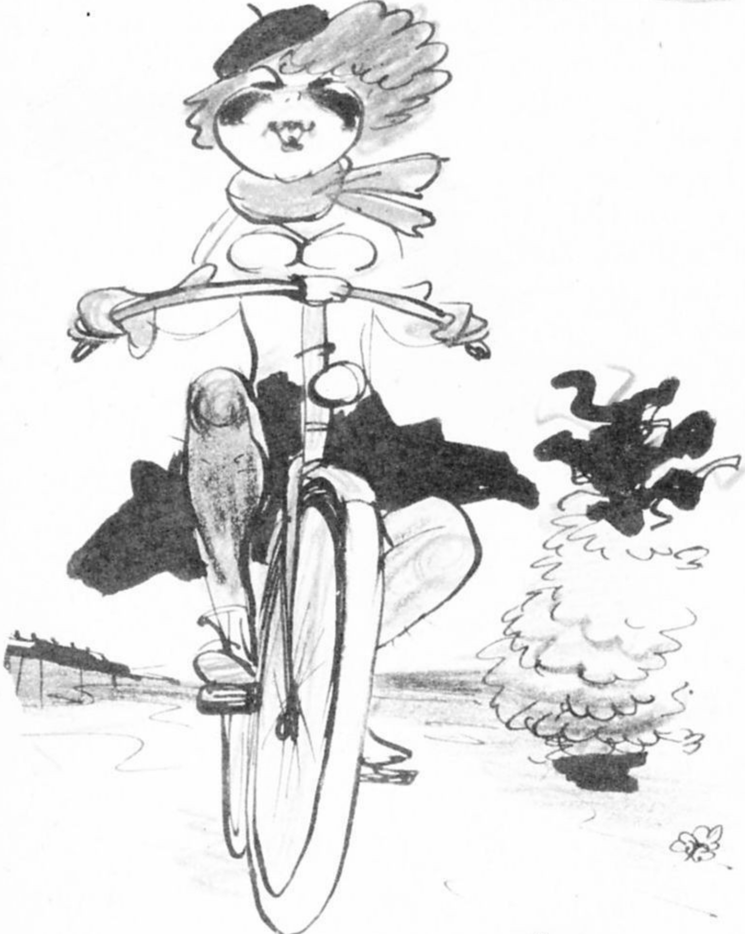

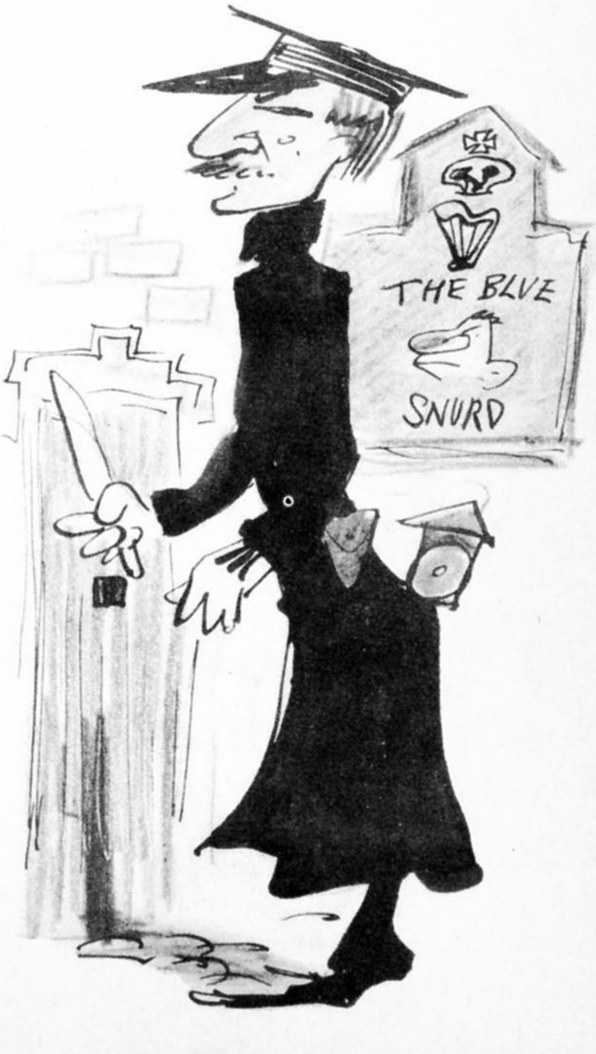
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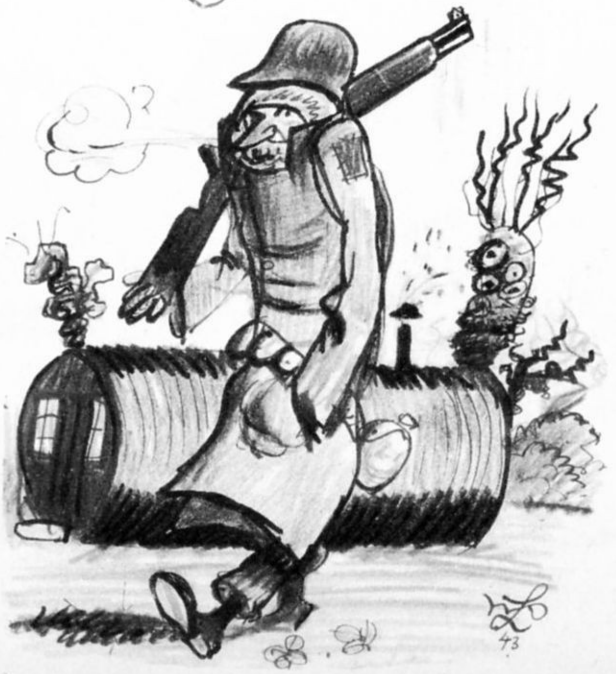

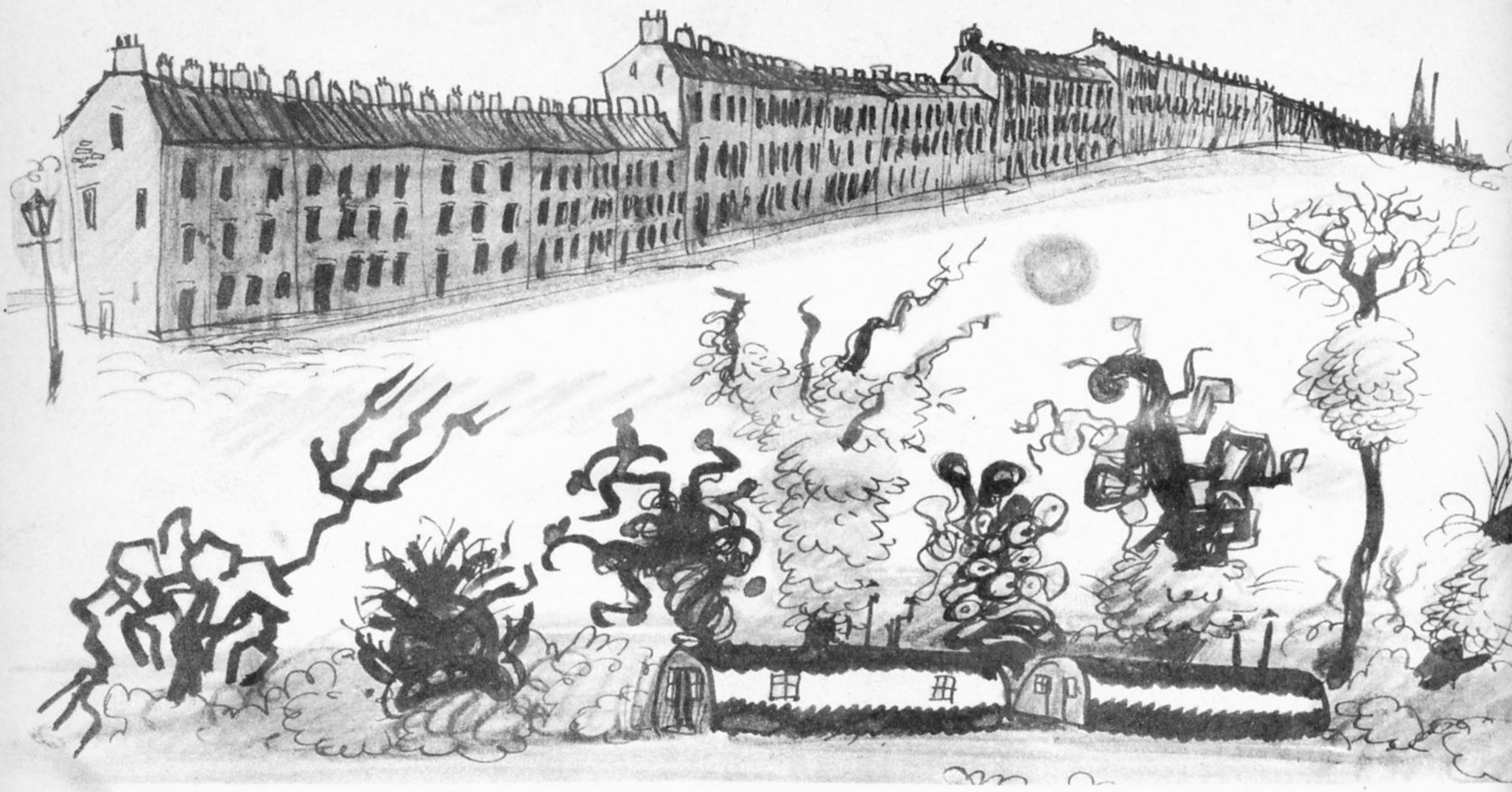

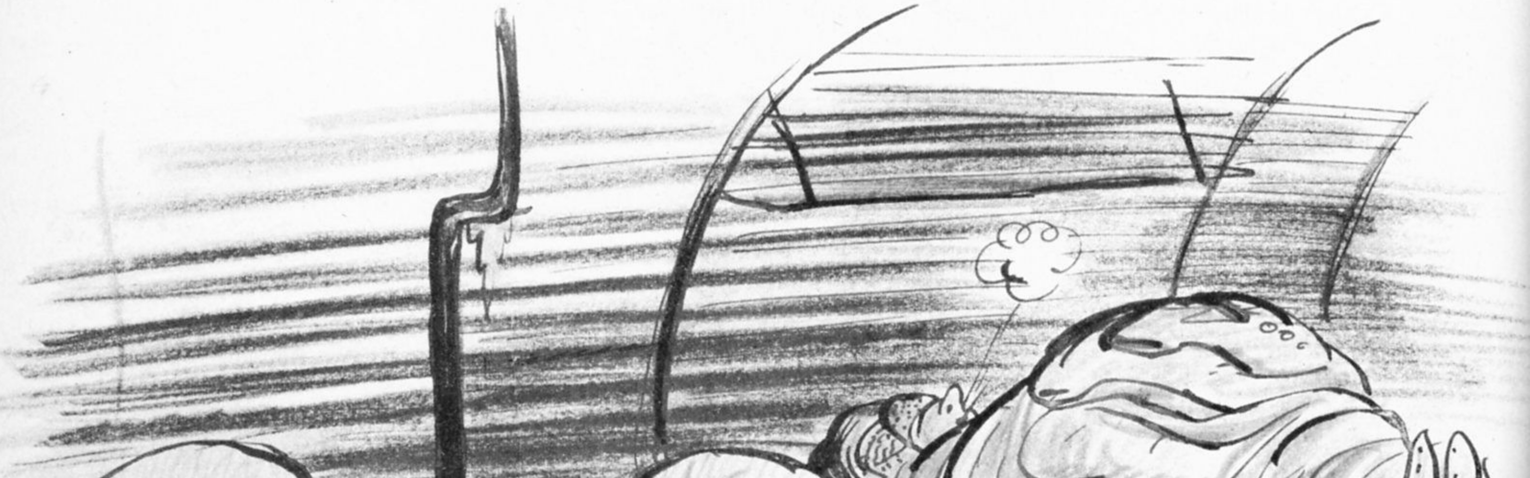
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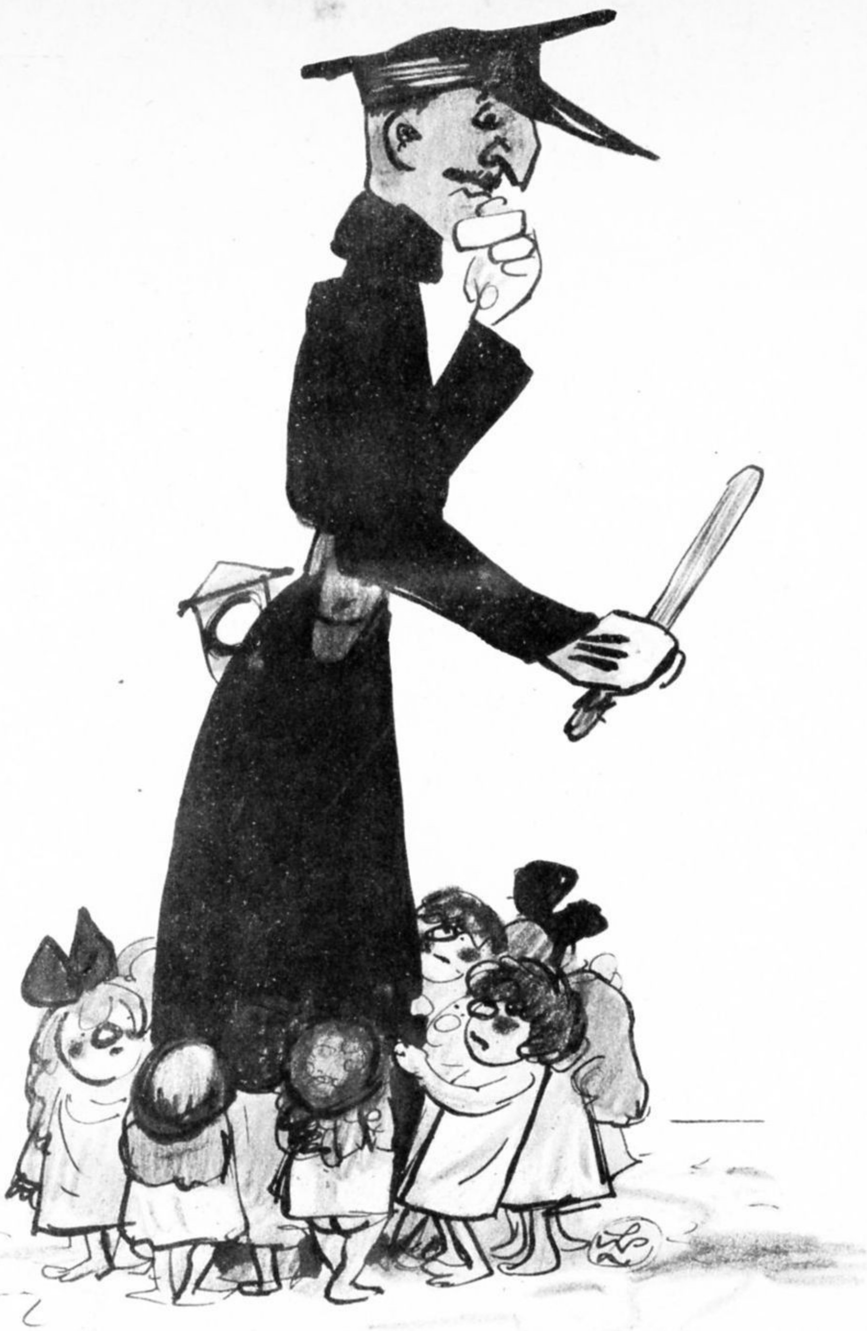
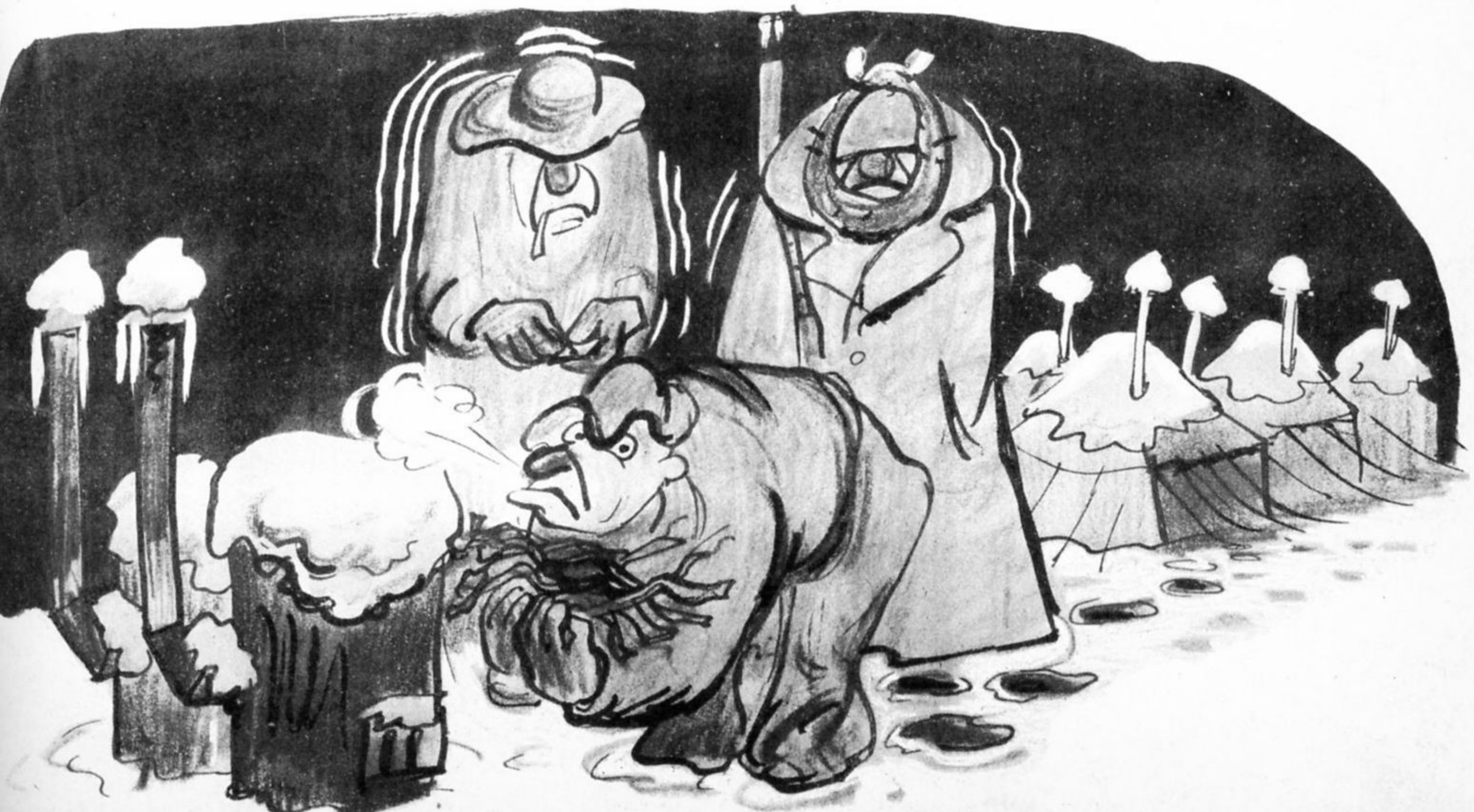
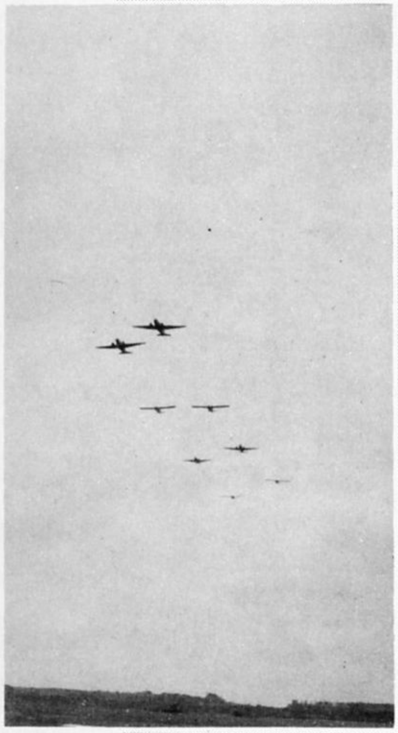
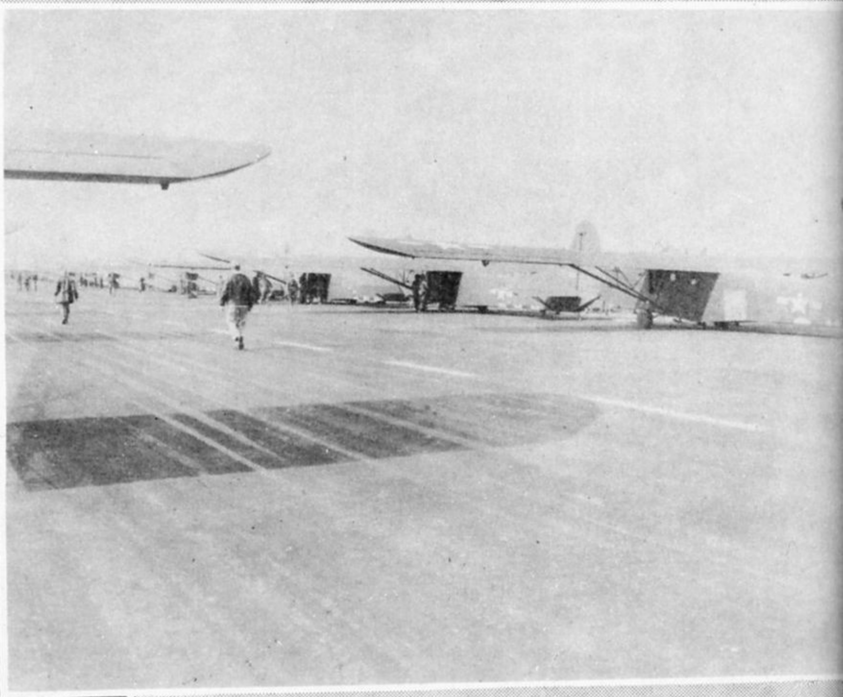




TRAINING GROUND





FOR TWO INVASIONS

Gen. Ridgway tries out the new glider

England

Silver Star Ceremony in Ireland.

The 82nd lands in England from Ireland.

Parachute Artillerymen train for Normandy.

CROSS CLUBMO

Gen. Ridgway tries out the new clubmobile.

LONDON & NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
LNER

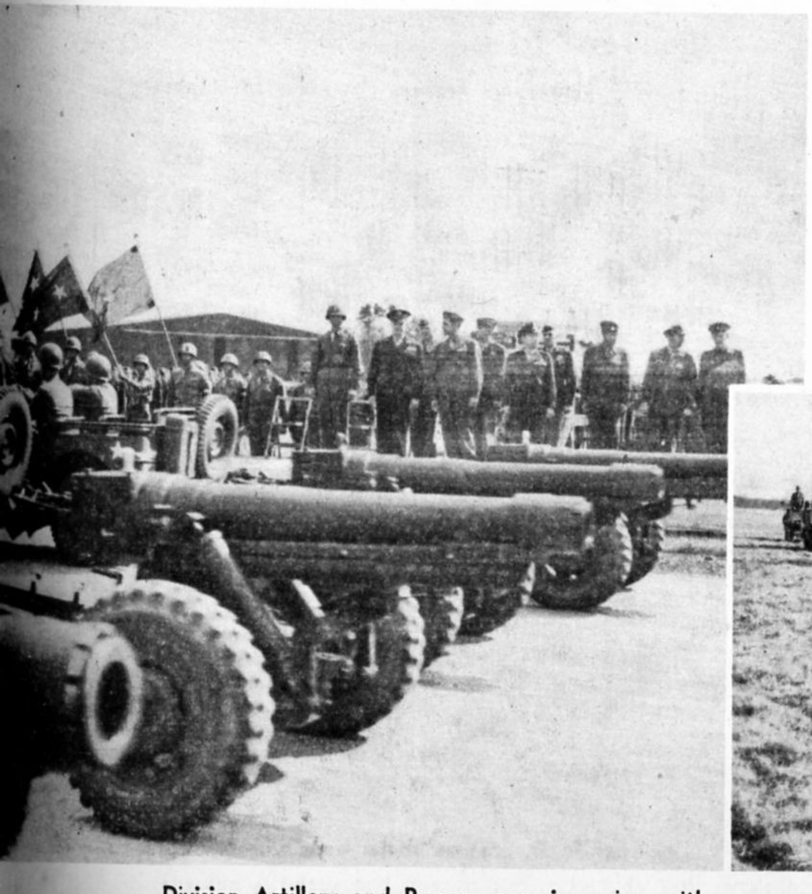
Leicester R. R. Station home from Normandy.

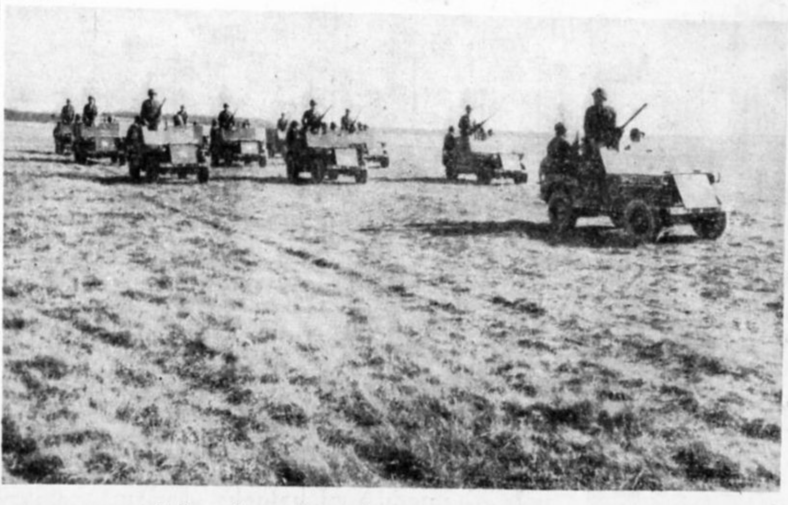
EISENHOWER REVIEWS . . . THE OLDEST AMERICAN ELEMENTS OF THE NEW ALLIED AIRBORNE ARMY.

Eisenhower, Ridgway and Brereton, Commanding General of the new Allied Airborne Army. Said Ike: "I've owed you (82nd) a lot in the past, and I imagine I'll owe you more in the future."

82nd lines up as the 52nd Wing flys overhead.

Generals Gavin, Eisenhower, Ridgway and Brereton watch the 82nd Airborne Division pass in review August, 1944.

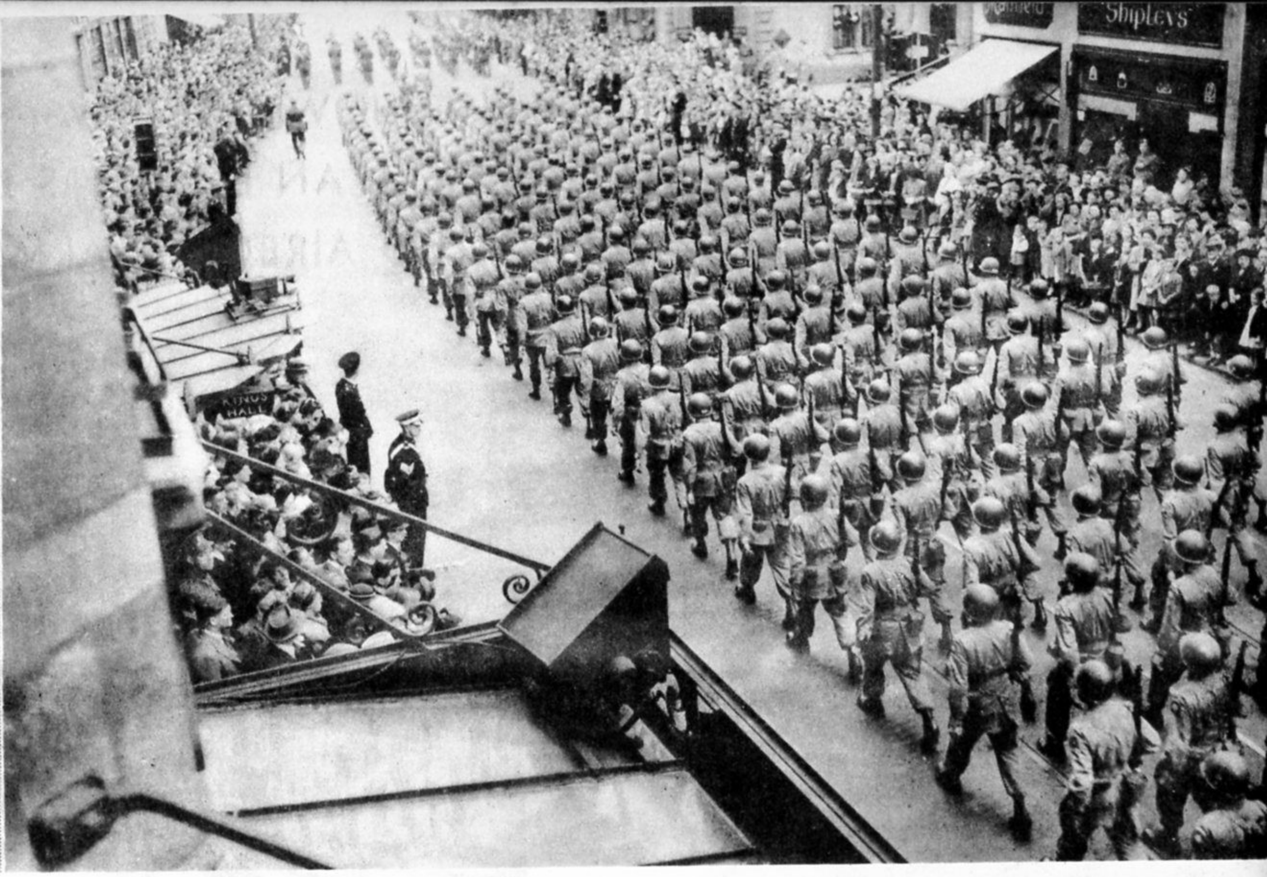




Division Artillery and Recons pass in review with weapons especially adapted to Airborne Warfare.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER WEEK

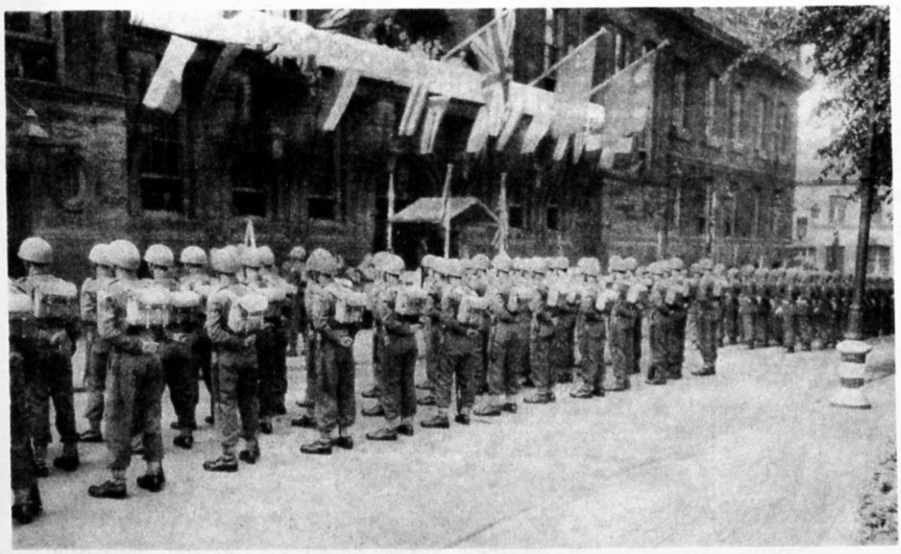
leicester, england



The 82nd parades in the Midlands.

ATS girls (British Wacs) swing up the Avenue with clock-like precision.

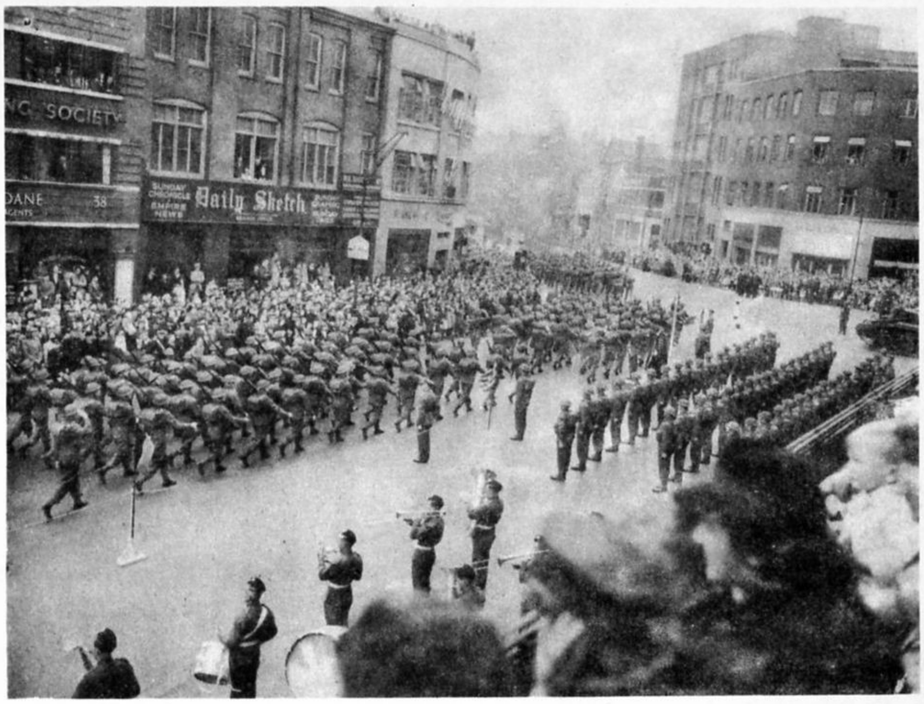
The "AA" band gives a concert that is well received.



Red devils at parade rest.

CHARLES SMI

The ATS drum and bugle corps passes in review.

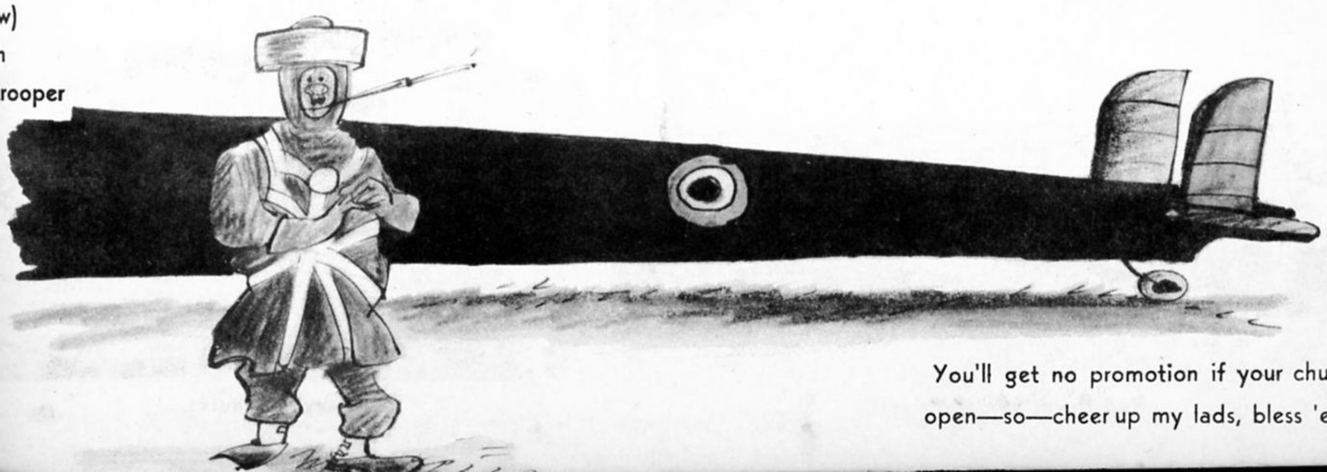

SOCIETY
Daily Sketch

Tommies in "the bloody infantry."

THE SWAN WITH TWO NECKS
WILLERBYS

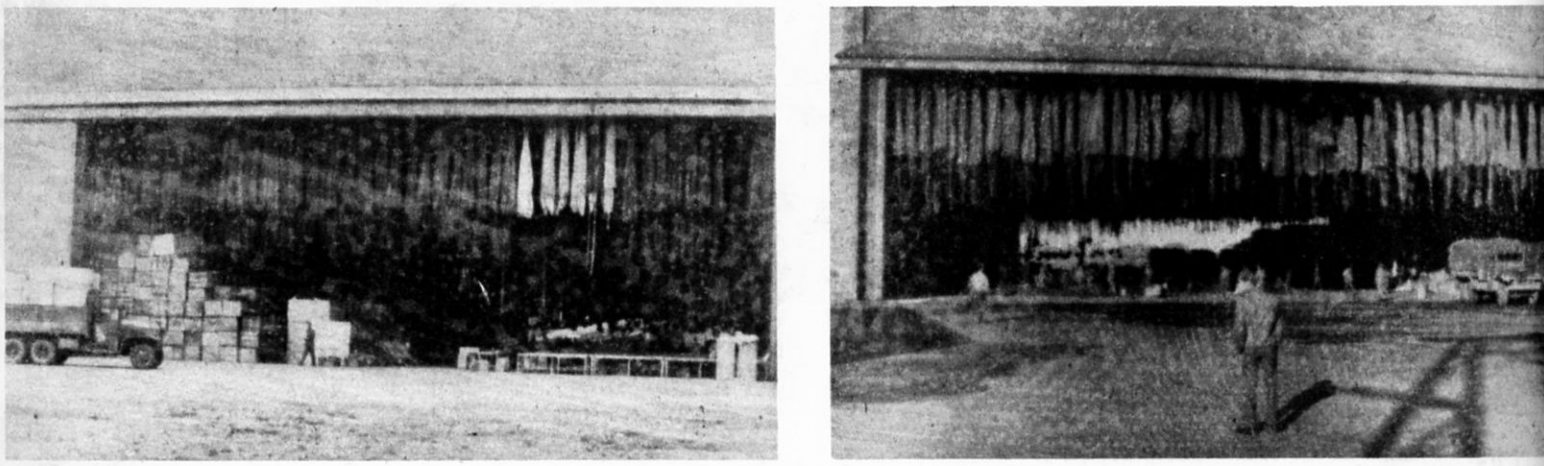
The "All-American" Soldier.

(Below)
British
Paratrooper

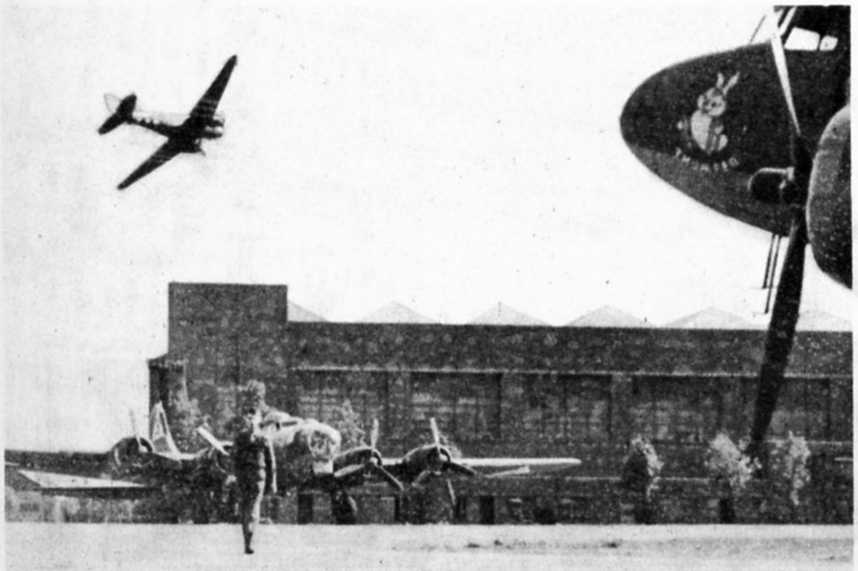


You'll get no promotion if your chute doesn't open—so—cheer up my lads, bless 'em all!

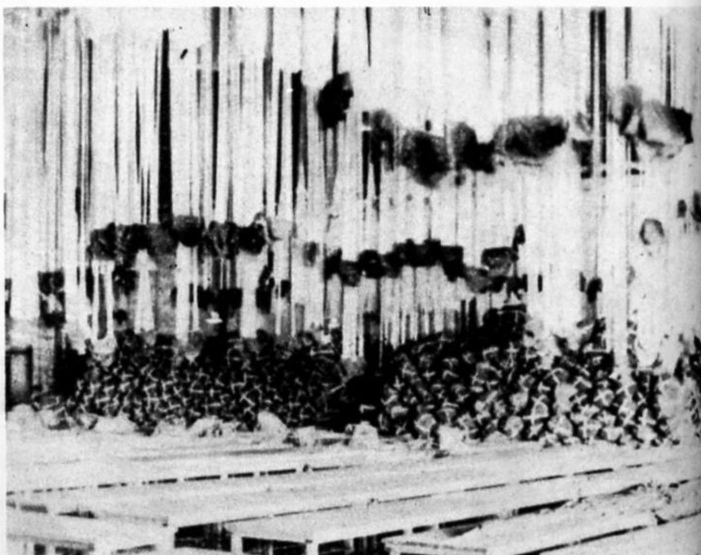
Ashwell Jump School.



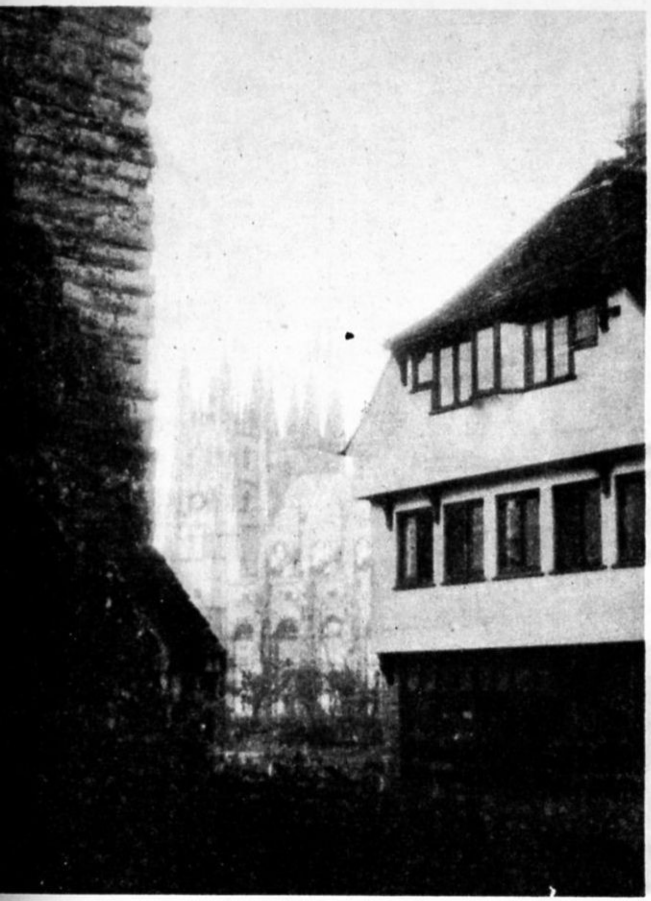
Hanging chutes after a Cottesmore jump.



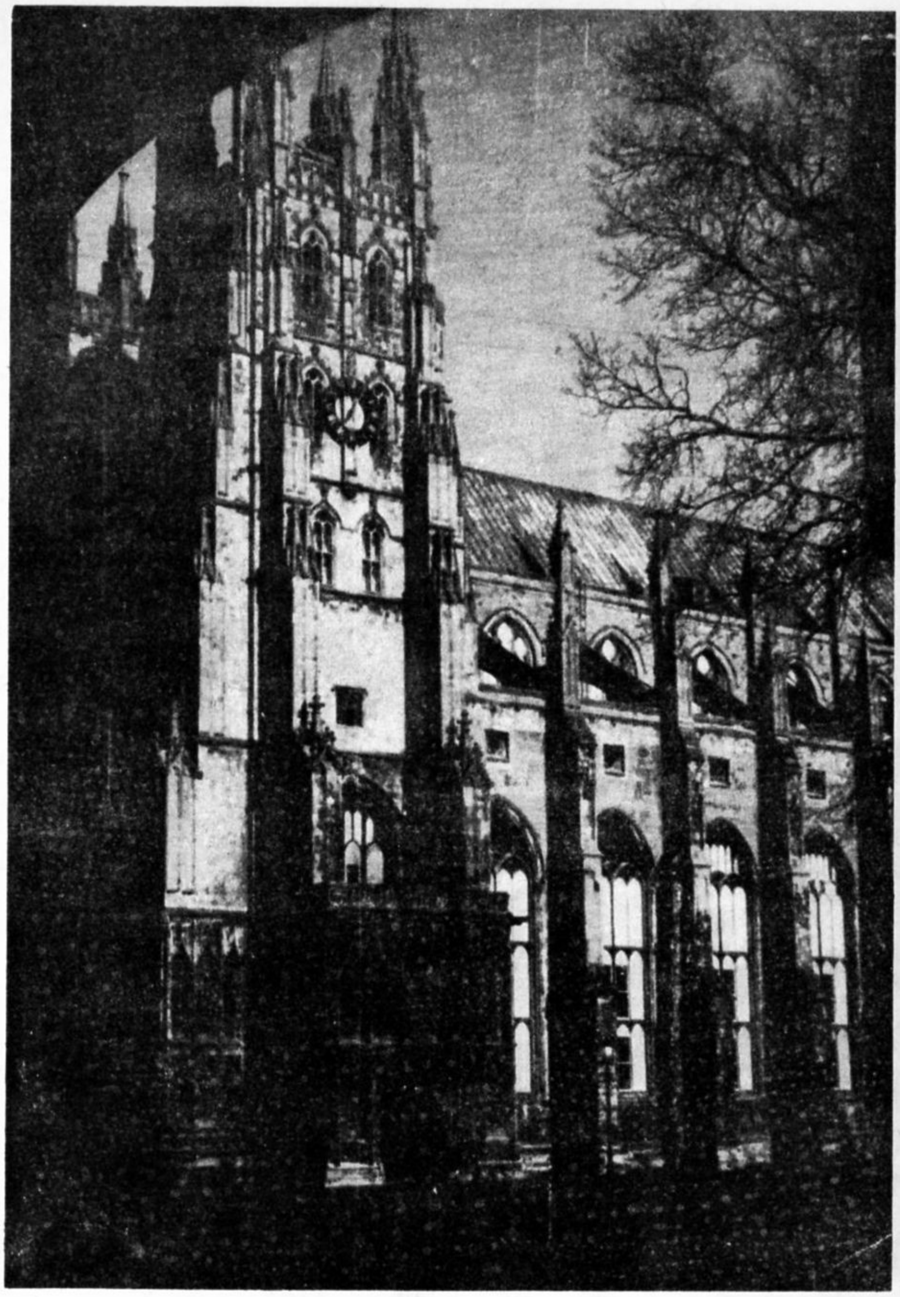
"A" Shed.



Drying chutes.

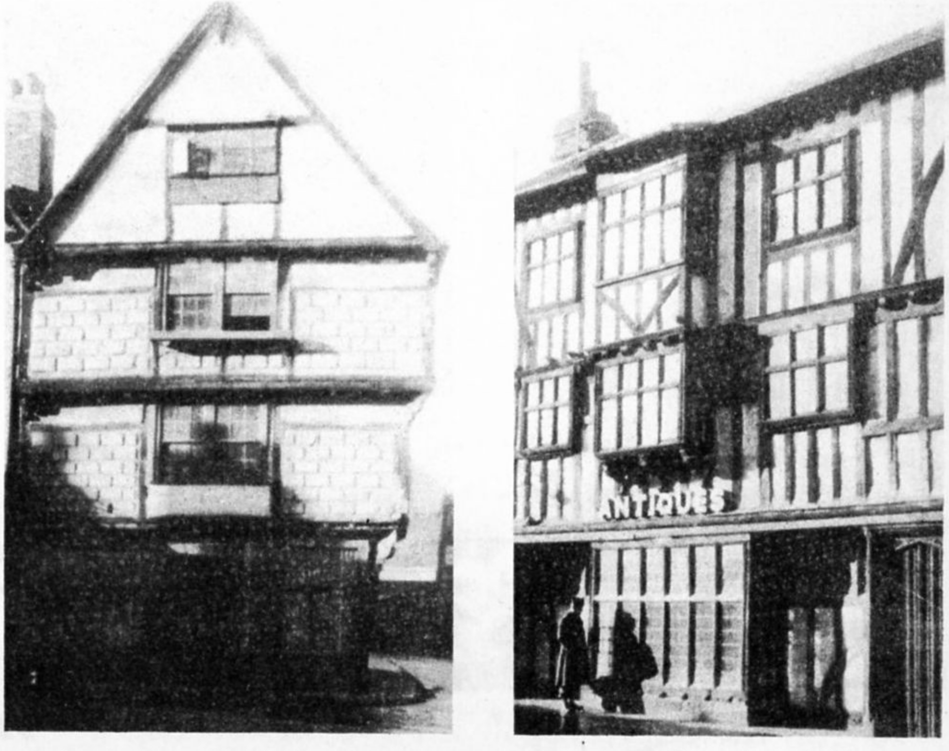


Canterbury



The Cathedral.

French Settler's Homes.



Medieval Structures.

SOCIAL LIFE REVOLVED AROUND THE PUB

HENRY J TARRATT
IND COOPE
ALLSOPP
IND COOPE
ALLSOPP

The other attraction was beer.

Carl Sigman's "Together We Sing" was an Anglo-American review featuring troopers and ATS girls.

AIRBORNE
AA
CHERBOURG
SICILY
KAIROUAN
ABLANCA

Airborne Troop-Carrier Team . . . the Puz brothers respectively members of 82nd and 9th T.C.C. meet at a party given in England (above).

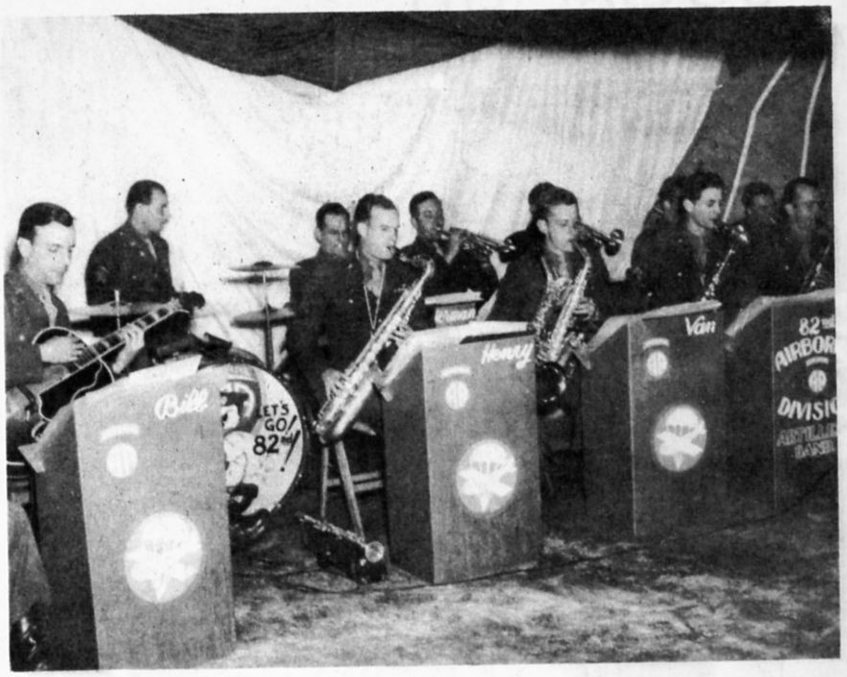
The Lord and Lady Mayor of Leicester played host to the 82nd at numerous social functions (right).

U.S.A.
1824819
508TH U.S. INFANTRY

A great general waves goodbye to his division — Ridgway leaves the 82nd for a new command and his third star.
The newly formed XVIII A/B Corps.

☆ ☆ ☆

JITTERBUGGING COMES TO ENGLAND

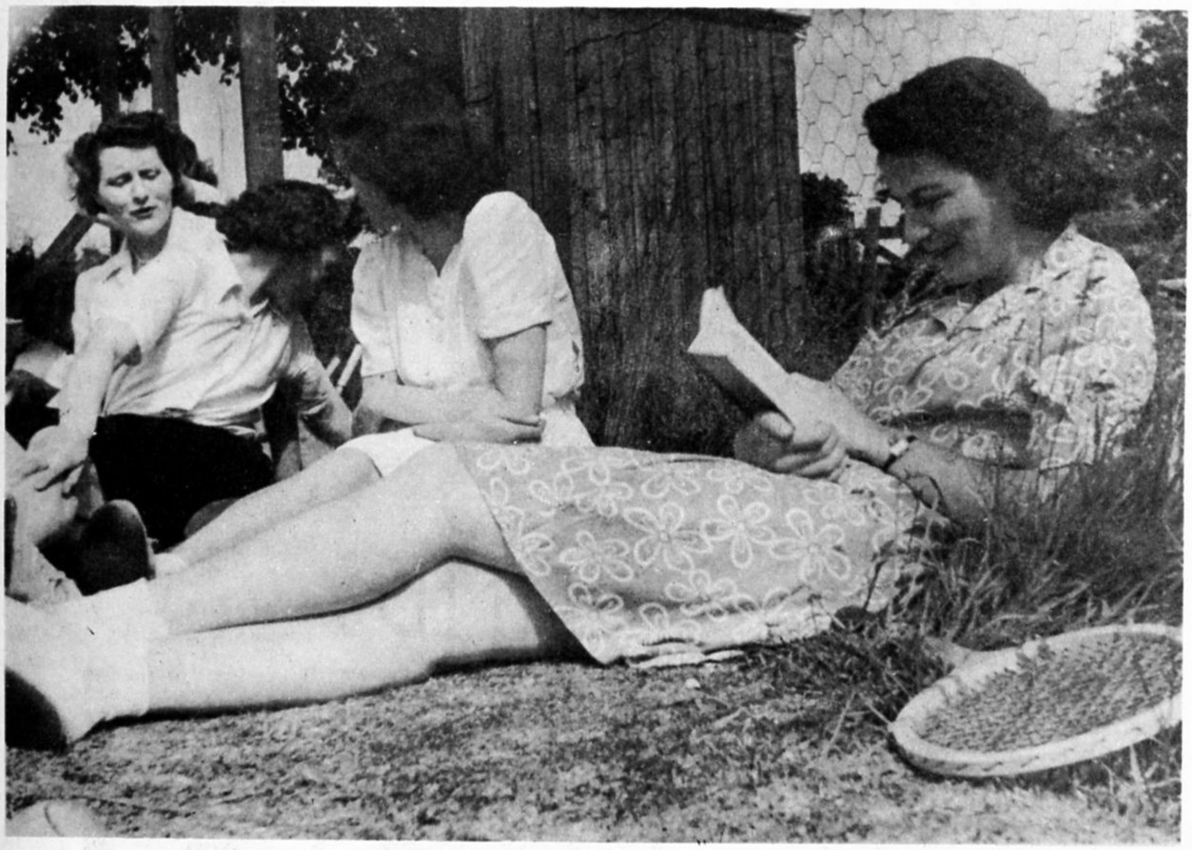

Bill
Henry
Van
LET'S GO! 82nd
82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION ARTILLERY BAND

The 82nd Divarty Band swings out for either.

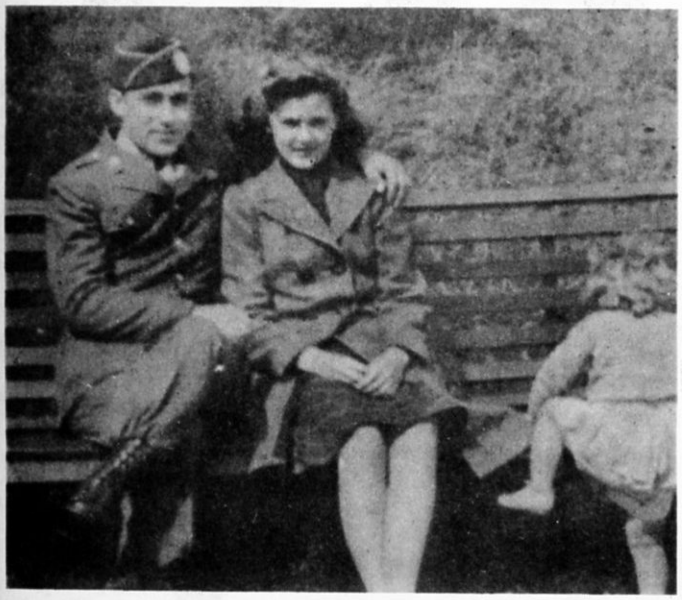
LAMBETH OR LINDY

Most of the English girls were in service, too.

Somewhere in England

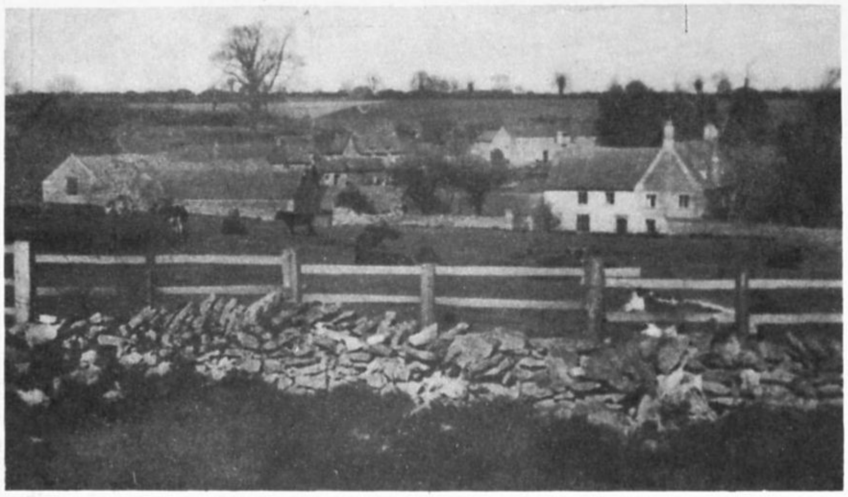


Tennis Cuties.



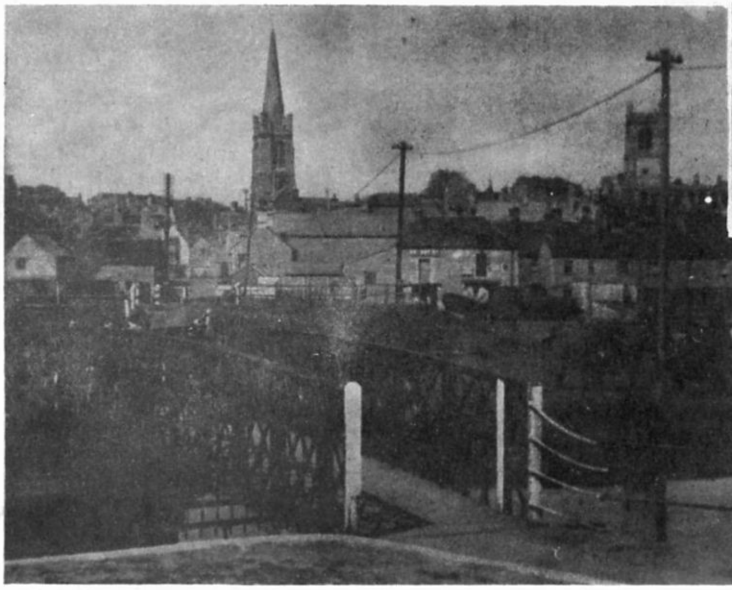
Spring in the Midlands.

The 'ounds.



Bucolic Scene.

English Trooper.



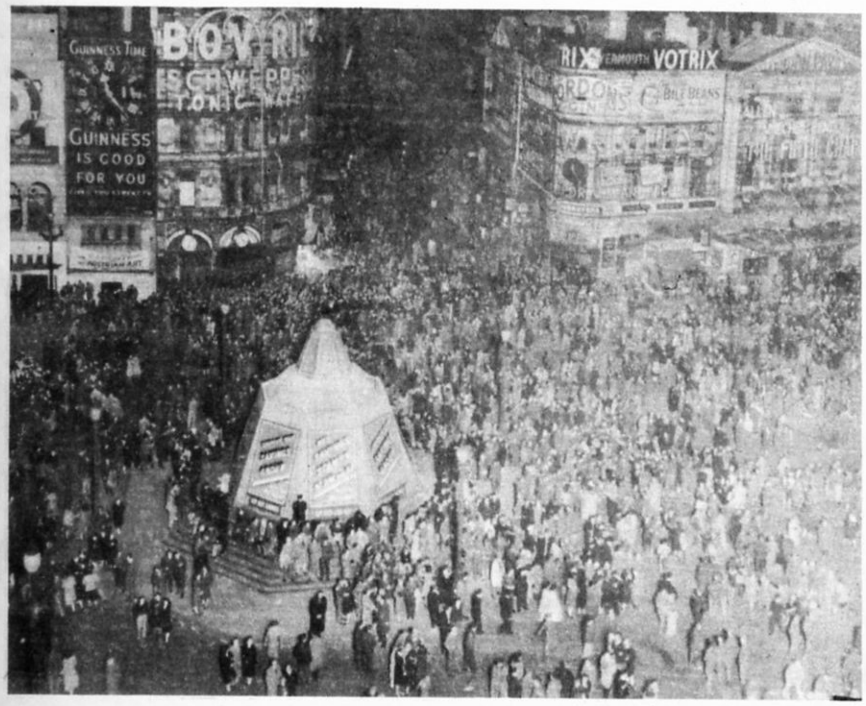
Stamford.

Free and Easy.

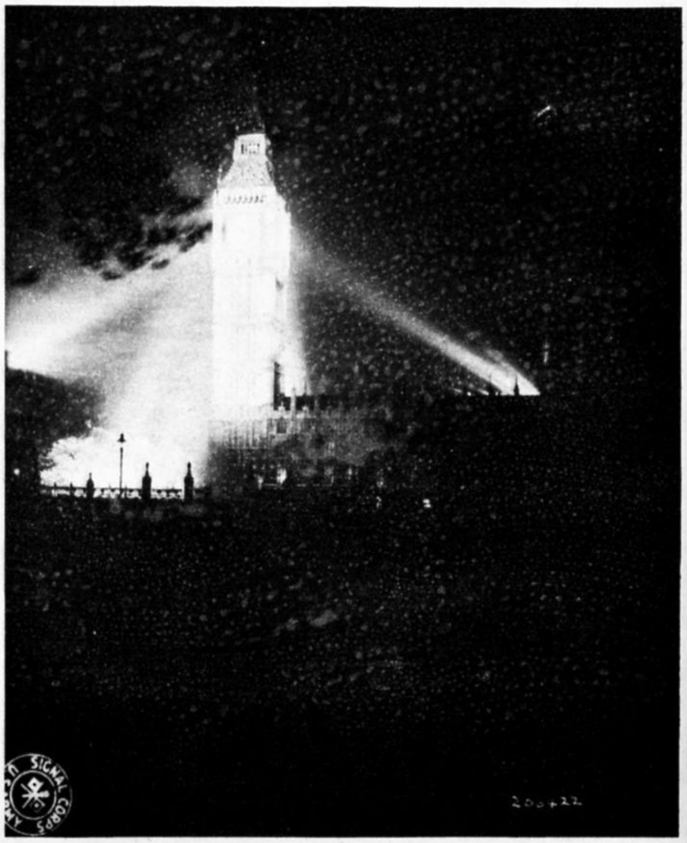
Diving for Butts at Ashwell.

Air raids had decreased but "Buzz Bombs" were an ever-present menace. Above right, Big Ben points defiantly at the sky after the last bomb has landed.

LONDON


GUINNESS TIME
BOVRIL
SCHWEPPES TONIC WATER
GUINNESS IS GOOD FOR YOU
VOTRIX
GORDON'S

Picadilly is filled with throngs on V-E night and Big Ben is lighted after a long sleep. The British symbol of invincibility.

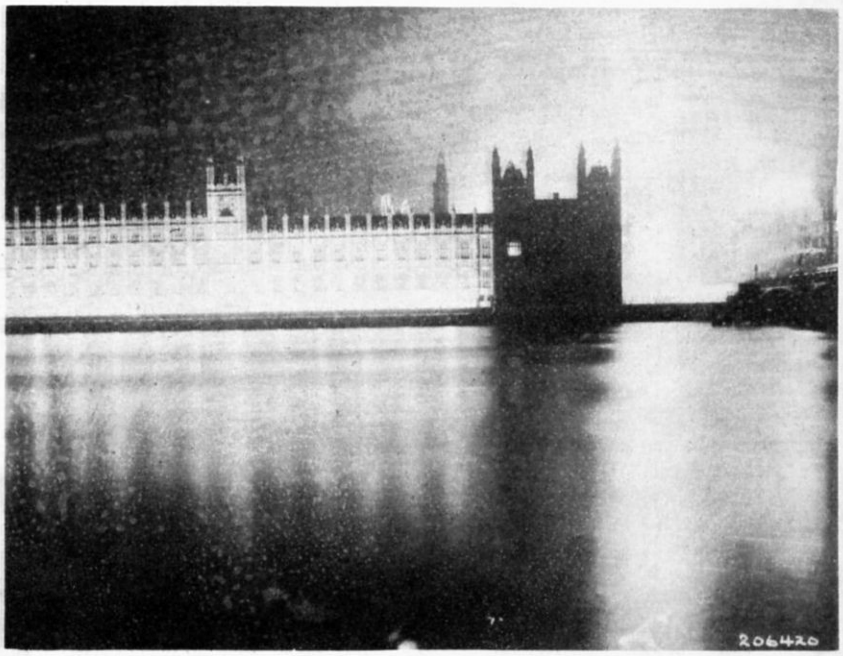


On our way to "The Tower."

ARTISTS
JAMES CAGNEY IN JOHNNY VAGABOND
JAMES CAGNEY
JOHNNY VAGABOND

Passing "Rainbow Corner" with Picadilly circus in the background.

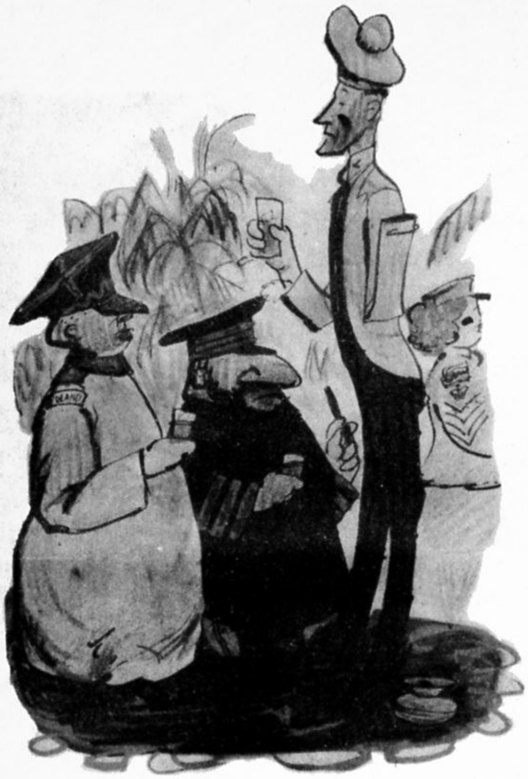
TOUR

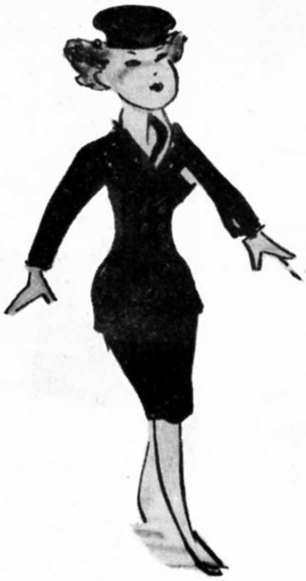


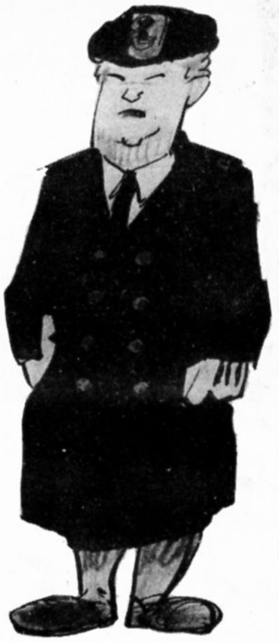
Left, a breather in the shadow of Big Ben and above, Parliament ablaze on V-E night, the first time since September 1, 1939.

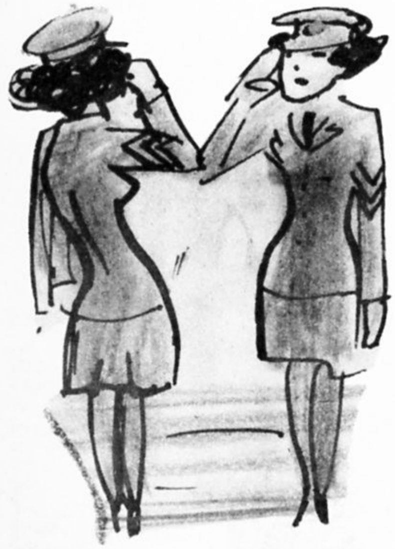
LONDON SCENES

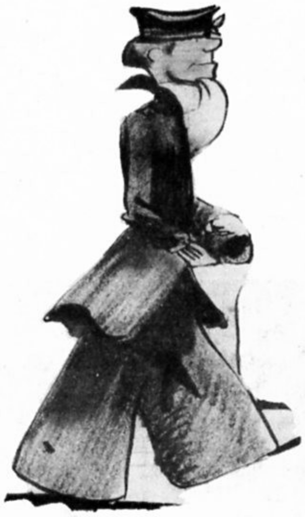
by Prescott

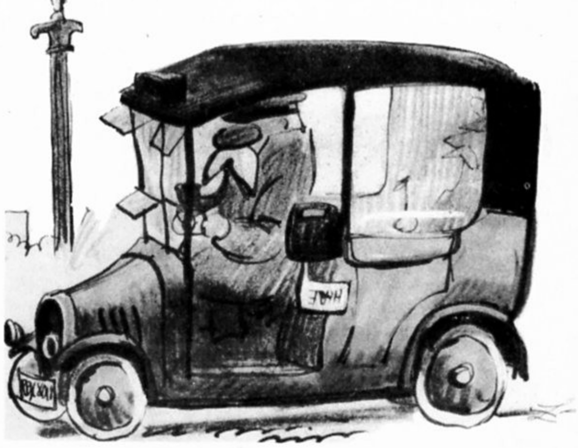


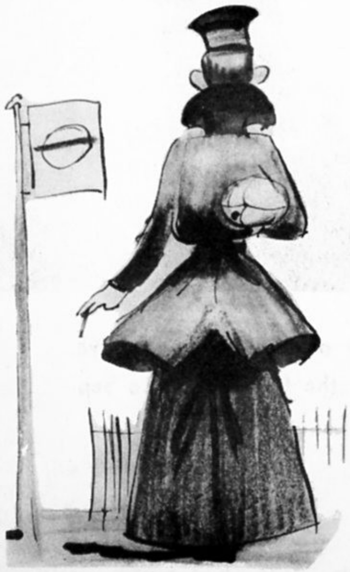


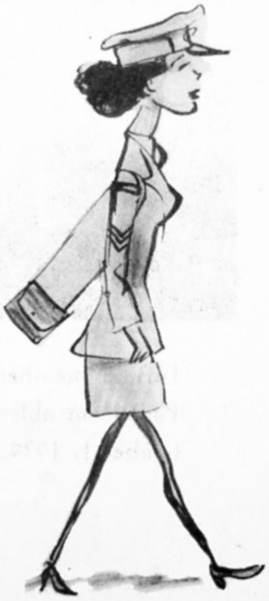


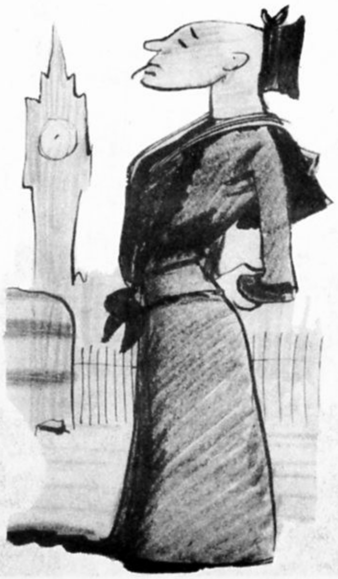




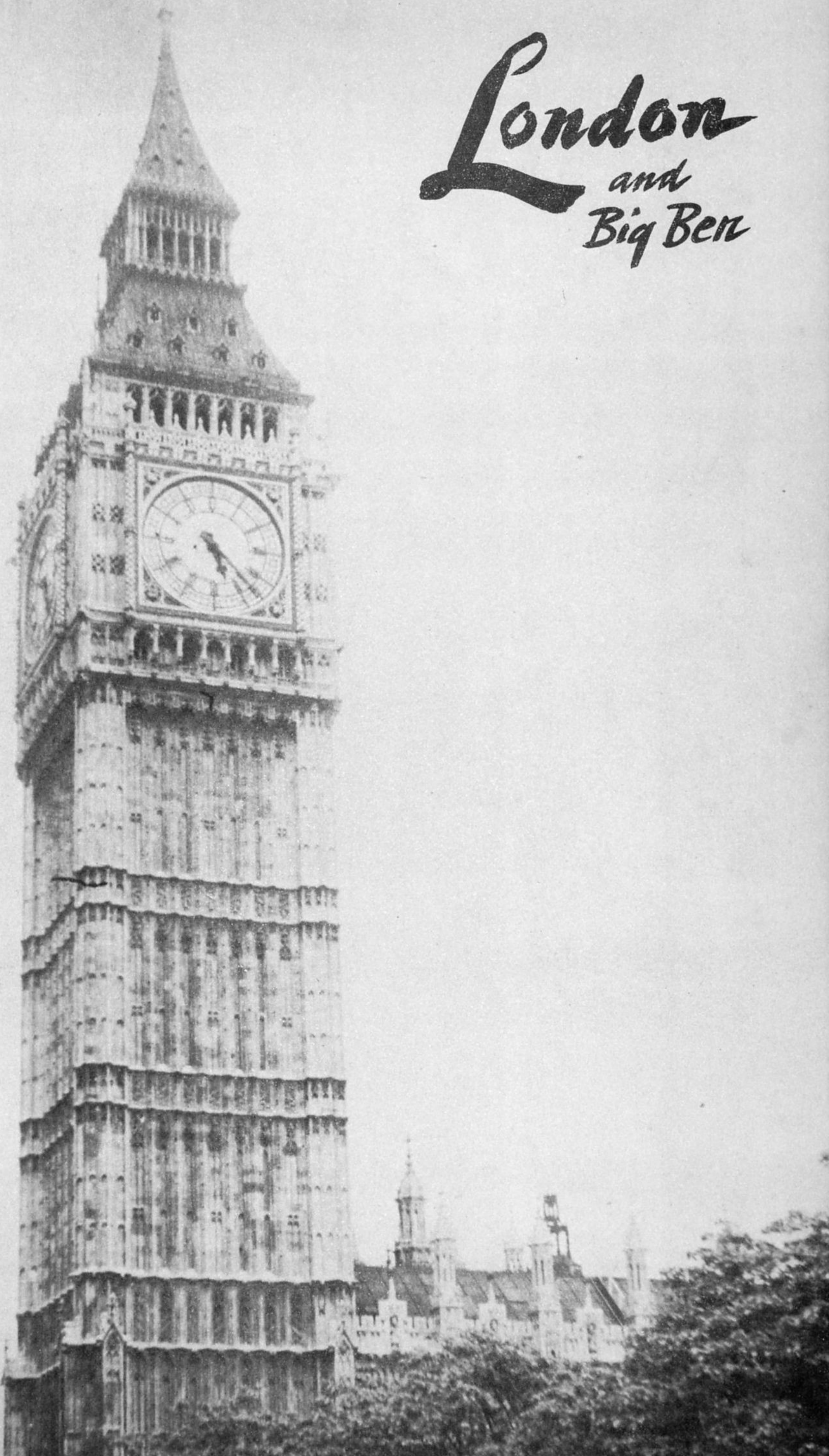






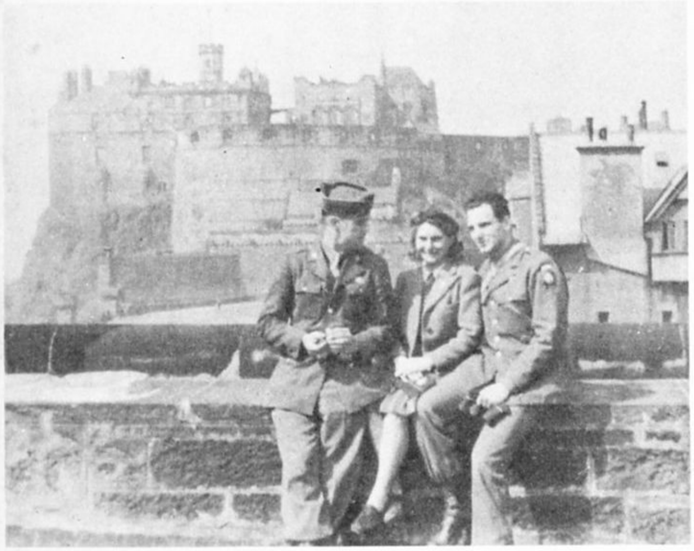


London and Big Ben



UK LEAVE...

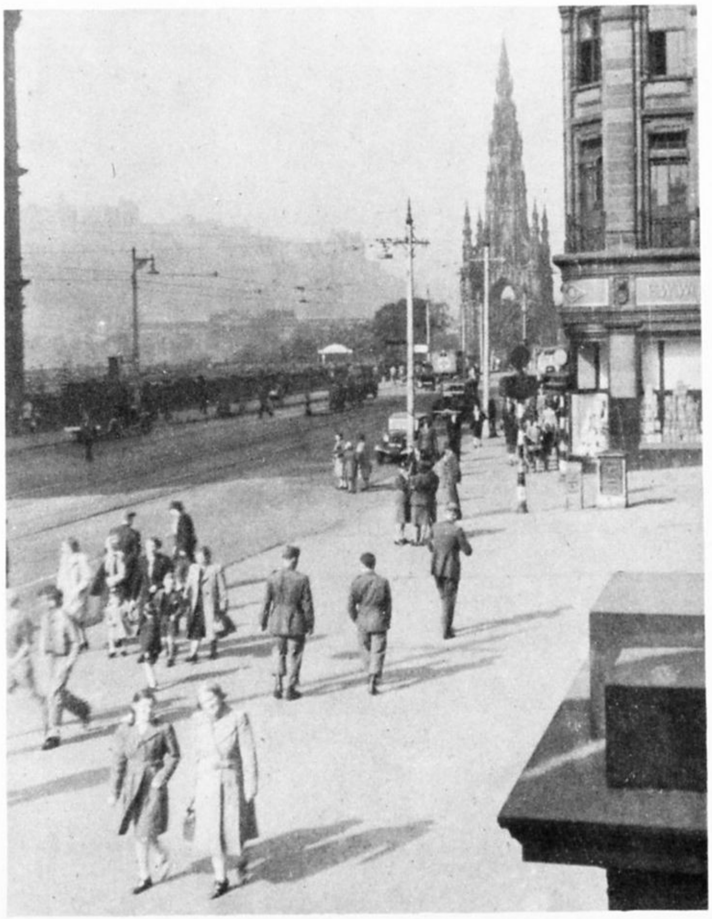
London Bridge.



Edinborough Castle.

"Mons Meg," Edinborough Castle.

London Fog.



Princess St., Edinborough.

Wild and Sweet the Piper Plays.

Edinborough Chimney Pots.

bonnie Scotland

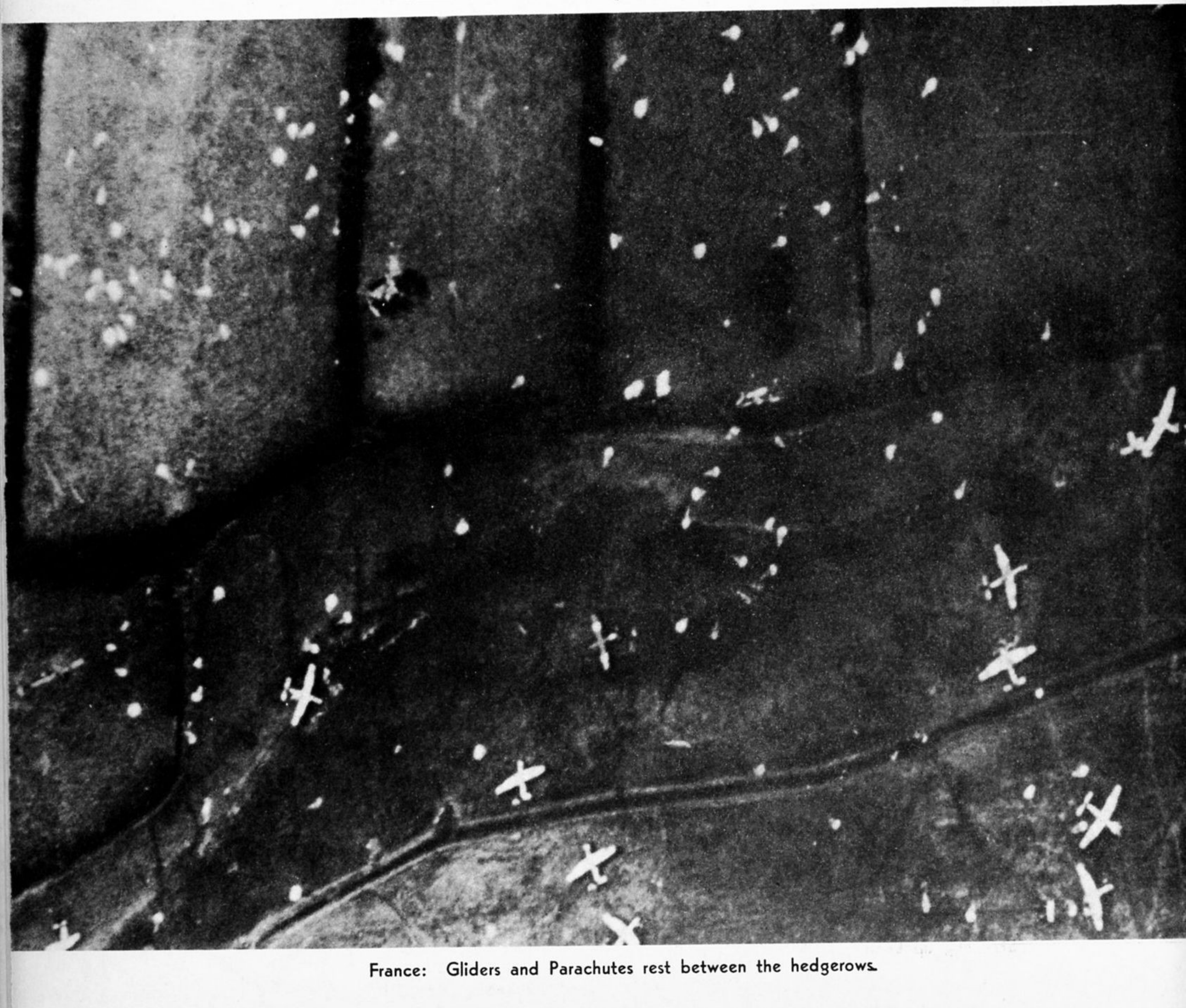
Blimey, mate, you blow it this way.

Steaming up Loch Lomond.

Furlough in Scotland.

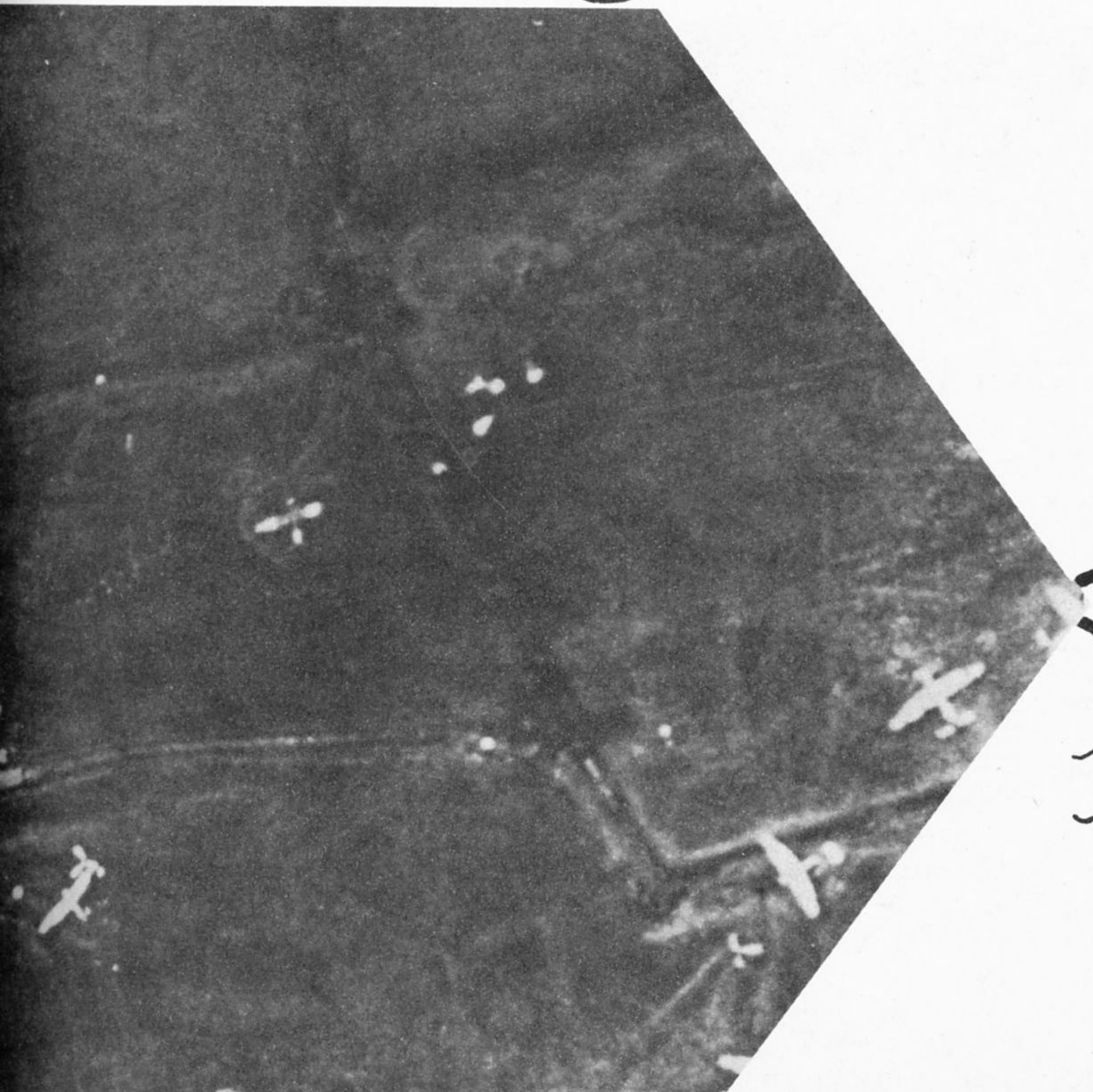
JUNE 6, 1944

Norm



France: Gliders and Parachutes rest between the hedgerows.

andy



Cherbourg
ste. Mere Eglise

Normandy

Loaded with paratroopers, a C-47 transport sails into the sky, bound for France.

33 days of action without relief, without replacements. Every mission accomplished. No ground gained ever relinquished.

By CAPT. CHARLES W. MASON

More than 10,000 members of the 82nd Airborne Division landed in Normandy by parachute and glider to initiate the invasion of Western Europe with the greatest airborne assault in history. Three regiments of parachutists, plus three glider anti-tank batteries and Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company were on the ground before 0430 on D-Day, led by Major General Ridgway and Brigadier General Gavin. By dawn, the key town of Ste. Mere Eglise was in their hands and vital bridges over the Merderet River near La Fiere, Chef du Pont and Grainville, were converted into bottlenecks from which the Germans, with overwhelming strength and firepower, tried unsuccessfully to push our troops. Division elements west of the Merderet immobilized enemy strength four times their own.

Two Artillery Battalions and other Division troops landed by glider at dusk of D-Day, followed by the Glider Regiment at dawn of D+1. By the 9th, Division forces east of the river had blasted the enemy out of the Merderet bridgeheads. These were consolidated by 12 June and the 90th Infantry Division passed through. The 82nd Airborne Division swung sharply south, to throw a surprise force across the Douve at Beuzeville la Bastille during the night of 12-13 June, and contacted the 101st Airborne Division at Baupte. Etienville was captured by assault. Parts of the 82nd were skillfully and quickly regrouped. They swept into position to pass through the 90th Division and lashed westward at 0800 on 14 June, to spread confusion and consternation among German forces in the area. The enemy was driven out of 100 square miles of territory between the Meredet and Douve Rivers in less than 48 hours. June 16th found the 82nd in control of St. Sauveur le Vicomte across the Douve. The bridgehead was pushed 3000 yards to the west and the 9th Division was able to pass through on the 17th, reach the coast on the 18th, and position itself for the drive to Cherbourg.

In full stride, the 82nd then pivoted suddenly to the south, crossed the Douve a third time at Les Moitiers en Bauptois and fanned out from Bois de Limors to Pretot and Baupte to consolidate a bridgehead of sufficient depth and breadth to accommodate the weight of the VIII Corps with its artillery and the 79th and 90th Infantry Divisions. While these latter units were preparing for the drive toward La Haye du Puits, the Airborne bulwarked the center of the salient, then struck with all its fury toward Hill 95 and Ridge 131 on the 3rd of July. A score of vital objectives were taken by Airborne troops in rapid succession against the full power of tenacious German resistance and held despite vicious counterattack. And while the adjacent Divisions fought slowly to their own goals, 82nd Airborne Division patrols thrust into La Haye du Puits days before the town was taken by Corps units designated to invest that strongpoint.

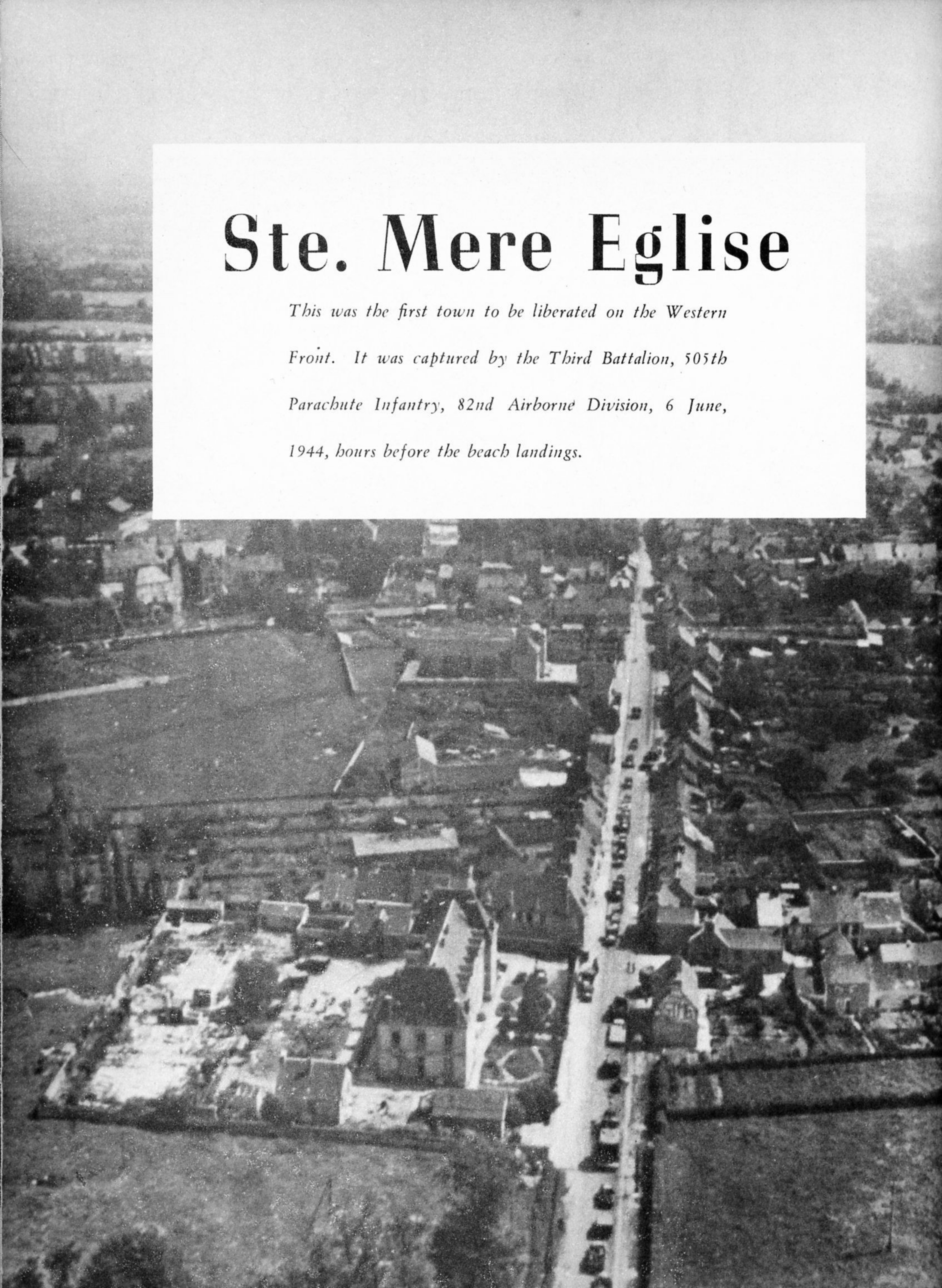
After 35 days of bitter, costly but decisive battle, four proud regiments of the 82nd Airborne Division were withdrawn from the front lines to lick grievous wounds in recuperation for the next mission. Their Rolls of Honor were lustrous with deeds of valor, skill and high achievements. More than half their officers and men were dead, missing or evacuated. Those who remained must have inherited the strength and spirit of absent comrades to accomplish each succeeding assignment with increased impetuosity and grimmer determination. From the hour of the initial assault, they had moved ever forward, asking no better place to die, than a post on the line of the deepest penetration.

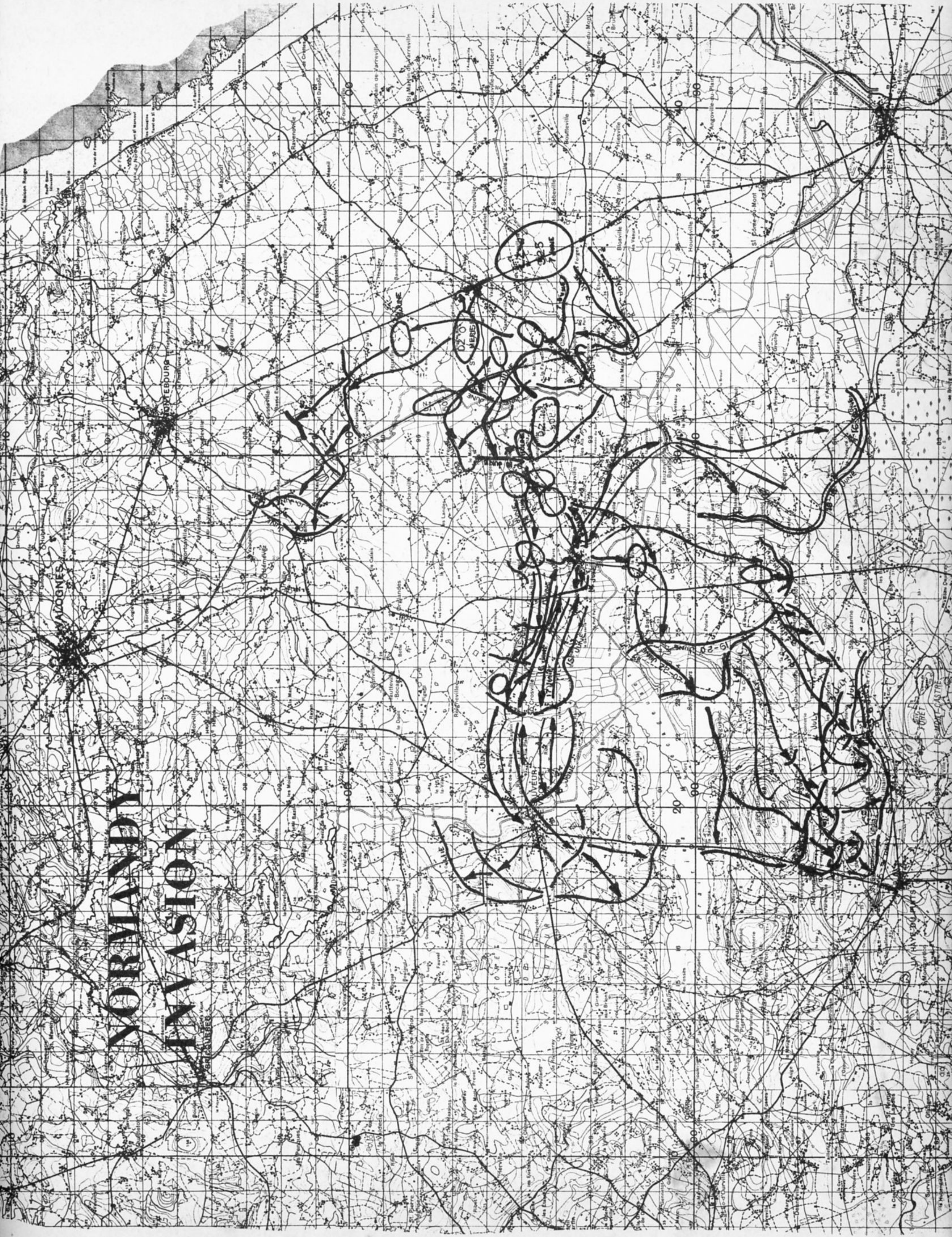
The magnificent achievements of 7 Allied Armies in France cannot dwarf the accomplishment of this one Airborne Division which denied three German Divisions access to the beachheads during the first 37 hours of the invasion and then broke the backbone of German resistance on the Cotentin Peninsula to insure the speedy investment of Cherbourg.

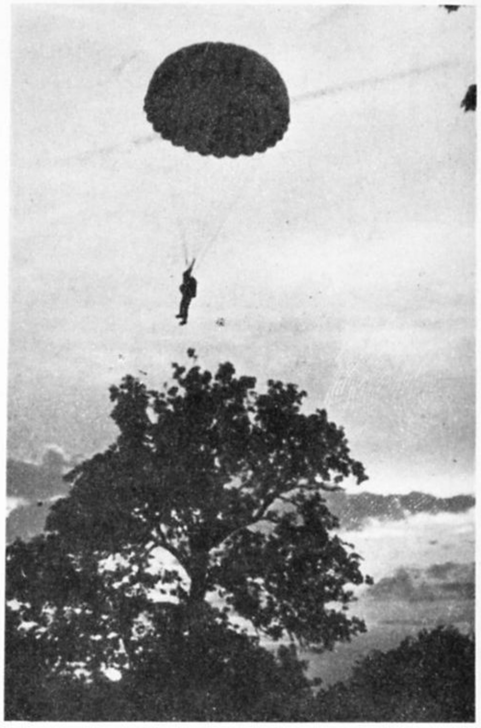
The 325 Glider Infantry loads their carriers at an English airfield, June 6.

Ste. Mere Eglise

This was the first town to be liberated on the Western Front. It was captured by the Third Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry, 82nd Airborne Division, 6 June, 1944, hours before the beach landings.



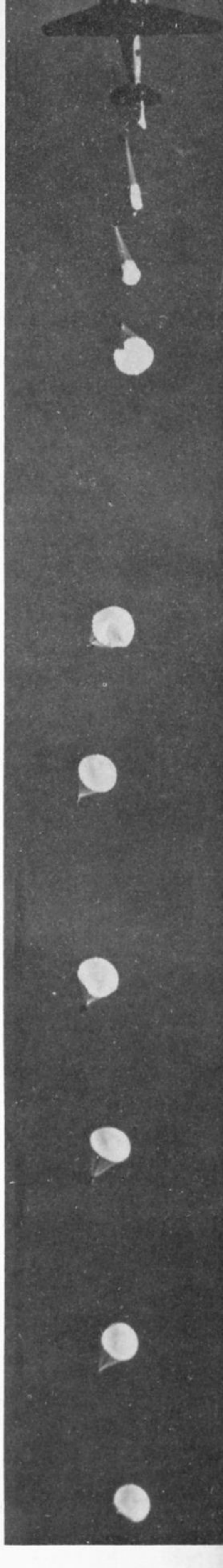

NORMANDY INVASION
VALOGNES
BRICQUEBEC
CARENTAN
MONTEBOURG



The paratroops jumped into the semi-darkness of the Norman night shortly after 1 A. M. becoming the first troops to land on Hitler's Western Fortress.

Normandy

NORMANDY BY PARACHUTE



IT WAS a grave-faced group that boarded the planes the night before D-Day. Gone was the habitual wise cracking and blonde talk. In its place was a sense of responsibility, and a tense anticipation. After countless months of training, learning how to get the other fellow first, our men were ready.

The plane ride lasted nearly two hours—two hours of physical as well as mental discomfort, for the cumbersome equipment, the Flak, the Chute opening and where and what you'll land in and on, can occupy even the calmest individual's mind in such circumstances. The wind was high, and the plane bounced about plenty, but no one got sick. Finally, the crew chief yelled that we were 20 minutes out from the drop zone. "O. K., guys, let's stand up and hook up," came the quiet voice of the jumpmaster. Everybody shuffled into line. Now was the time when all Paratroopers get the old "Butterflies"—the time spent between hooking up and waiting for the jump order. We must have checked our straps and equipment a hundred times. Then, suddenly, the jumpmaster's command: "Let's go!"

The nervousness had lifted, just as it always does when the crucial moment comes. We all pushed towards the door—come what may. We were ready and wanted to get it over with. Out I went. Then with a jolting jerk that temporarily leaves you breathless, the old silkworm has blossomed again. Looking toward the ground, I am suddenly very clear headed and alert. Tracer bullets are coming up all around us. It seems almost as if you are walking down a fiery stairway. Coming to your senses, you see the ground right below you and get ready to land. With a dull thud, you hit the ground. Then, in a nervous jumble that seems like years, your thumby hands, clumsy with tension, unfasten your straps, and you are free—for action.

First, we must reorganize. At night, this is a real problem. Picking up men here and there from the widely scattered parachutes, you assemble as many as possible and then, when the flare goes up, you proceed to the Battalion assembly area.

Dawn on D-Day came clear, cold and tense. Our group was now assembled and pushing toward Ste. Mere Eglise. We arrived in the town, but for our particular group resistance was passive, with the exception, of course, of the ever-present snipers. Our Battalion had been given the mission of defending the northern sector of the town. (Through Ste. Mere Eglise runs the main road of the Cherbourg Peninsula. It was imperative that the 505th Parachute Regt. hold this road at any and all cost. It was along this road that the Wiley Jerry would try to send his reinforcements. They must be stopped, until the beach landings were completed.)

Arriving at our company defensive sector, one platoon was dispatched to the town of Neauville Au Plain, 2 miles further north, to act as an outpost line. Everything was quiet, and we wondered where Jerry was.

For once, nobody needed to prod us to dig in. About noon, we could hear firing to the north and knew our outpost was tangling with the Germans. Then, the shells began to scream their missiles of misery about us. Dirt really flew as we dug faster and deeper into our hedgerow. Small arms fire also began to open, and we knew the Nazi had arrived. Who can explain the terror that strikes one's heart when those shells begin to shatter all around? Small arms and machine guns we can all take, but the deafening roar and the flying shell fragments never lose their terror for even the bravest Airborne Soldier.

Sometime that afternoon, a breathless runner legged it in from the outpost and told us the platoon was holding off an entire Battalion, and would it be all right to withdraw. Receiving permission, the messenger took off to tell the Platoon leader it was O. K. About an hour later, the platoon returned. Gone were many faces that had become so much a part of our life the last two years. We didn't have to question those that were left. One look at their grimy, shocked countenances told more than words can ever tell.

Night fell, and with it the enemy artillery barrage increased in intensity. Under the cover of darkness, the Germans had moved up to within 100 yards of us. Shells and bullets rained about us like hail on a tin roof back in Iowa, only we had no tin roof. We held our ground. Suddenly, the roar of the old "sweat-boxes" was heard, and as we looked skyward we could see C-47's, towing and releasing gliders. No paratrooper was ever so glad to see gliders before. They were our enemies back in the states, but we were sure glad to see our buddies now. We could use some glider artillery, too. Many of the gliders failed to land near us, but a sufficient number came in to relieve the pressure and alleviate the gravity of our position considerably. All night long, the Kraut artillery broke around us.

At dawn, the German attacked again. We held our fire until some were only 50 yards away, then layed down such a heavy curtain of fire that any further advance was impossible. When their attack had bogged down, we launched our counter blow, laying down a withering fire as we left our foxholes, driving them ¾ of a mile. A temporary lull came in the battle, and Heinies started streaming out under a white flag to give themselves up.

In German, they told us our fire was too accurate—there were too many casualties, and they were forced to surrender.

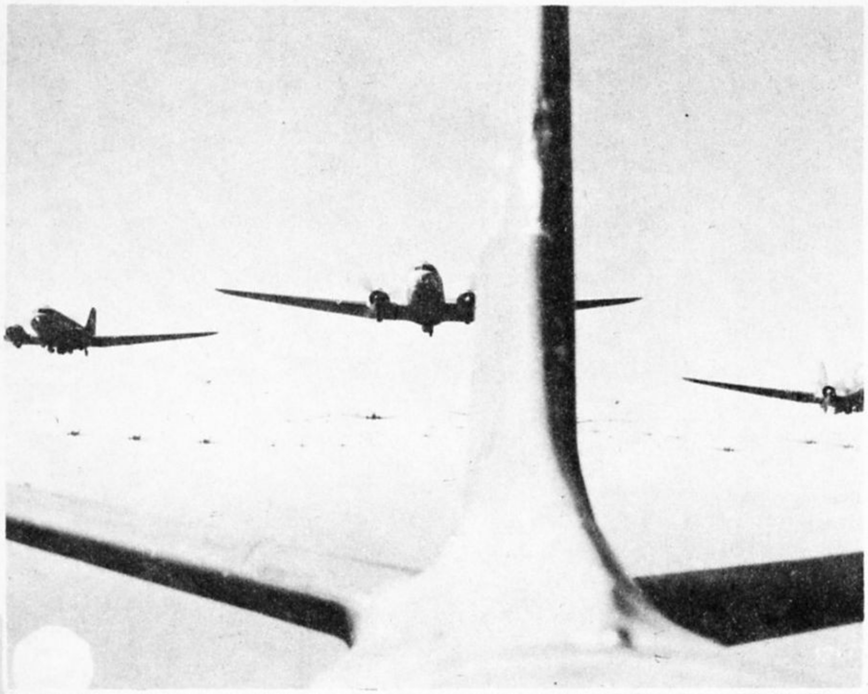
That afternoon, the first elements of Seaborne Infantry came up through our position. Our unshaven men, hollow eyed from lack of shut-eye, cheered the footloggers and tankers with all the enthusiasm they could muster, and then relaxed for the first time in nearly 48 hours.

With idle time on our hands, at last we got a chance to look around and take stock in the situation. Dead Jerries lay strewn over the ground, their faces a series of grotesque masks. Smashed mauser rifles and Mark VI tanks were wrecked too. We did pay a price, also—not a high one by proportion, but it's tough to see your Buddies killed, no matter how few.

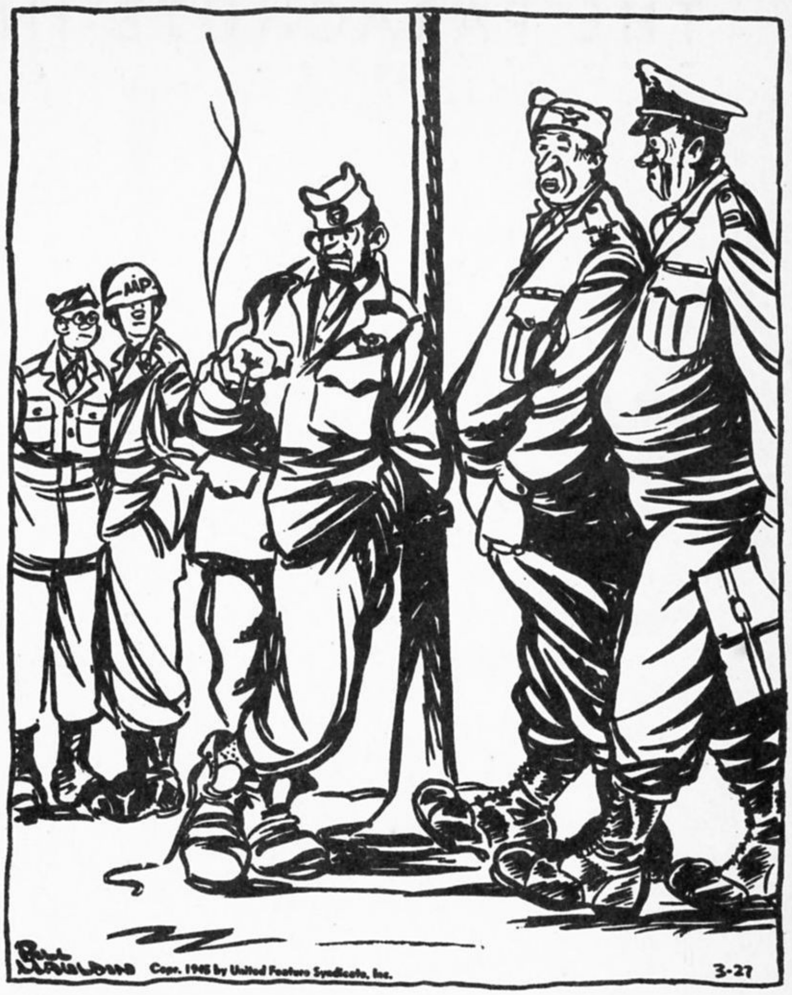
Shaking my head, I returned to my fox hole, sat by my radio and wondered if it was all worth it or not — whether we were fighting for Benny and Frank, or if there was something greater pushing us all. Then, a message came over the radio. It was from General Gavin—"Slim Jim" we call him. I scribbled the message down on the pad, and after I'd "Rogered" I took time to read it. It was brief all right. "Slim Jim" just said, "A good job, damn well done." That answered my question.

Joe Stanger

THE PARACHUTE INVASION OF Normandy



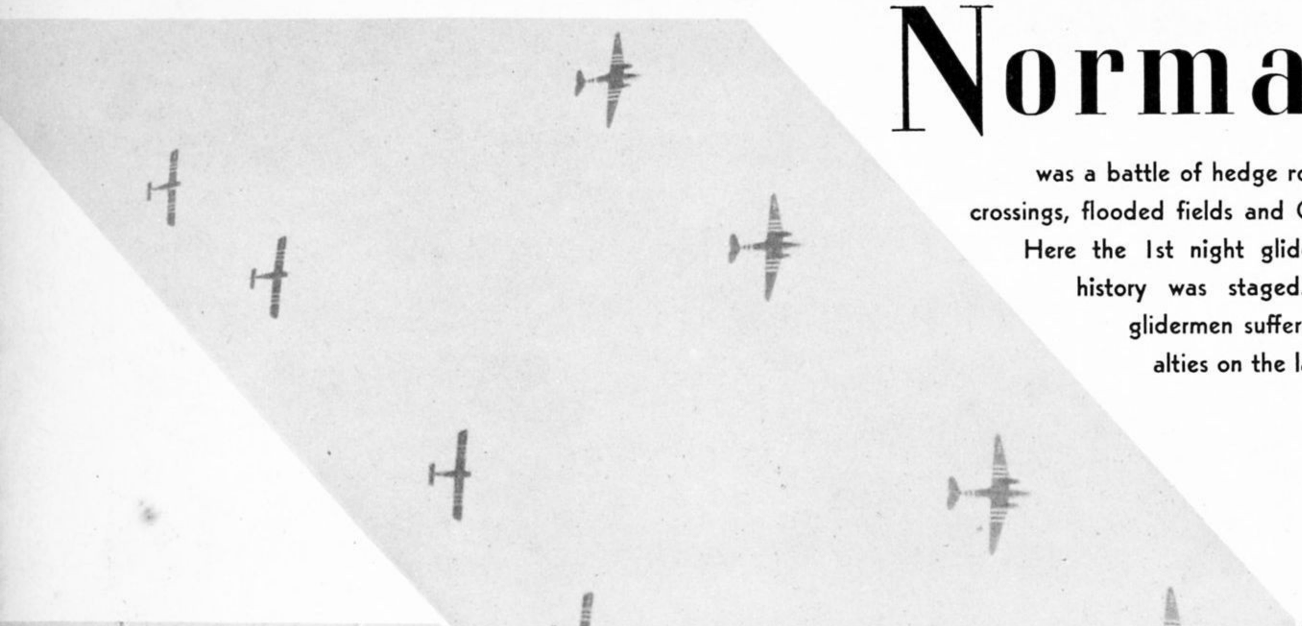
The flight was through moonlight and thick clouds, the climax of which was the jump into the flak-fountains over the drop zone.

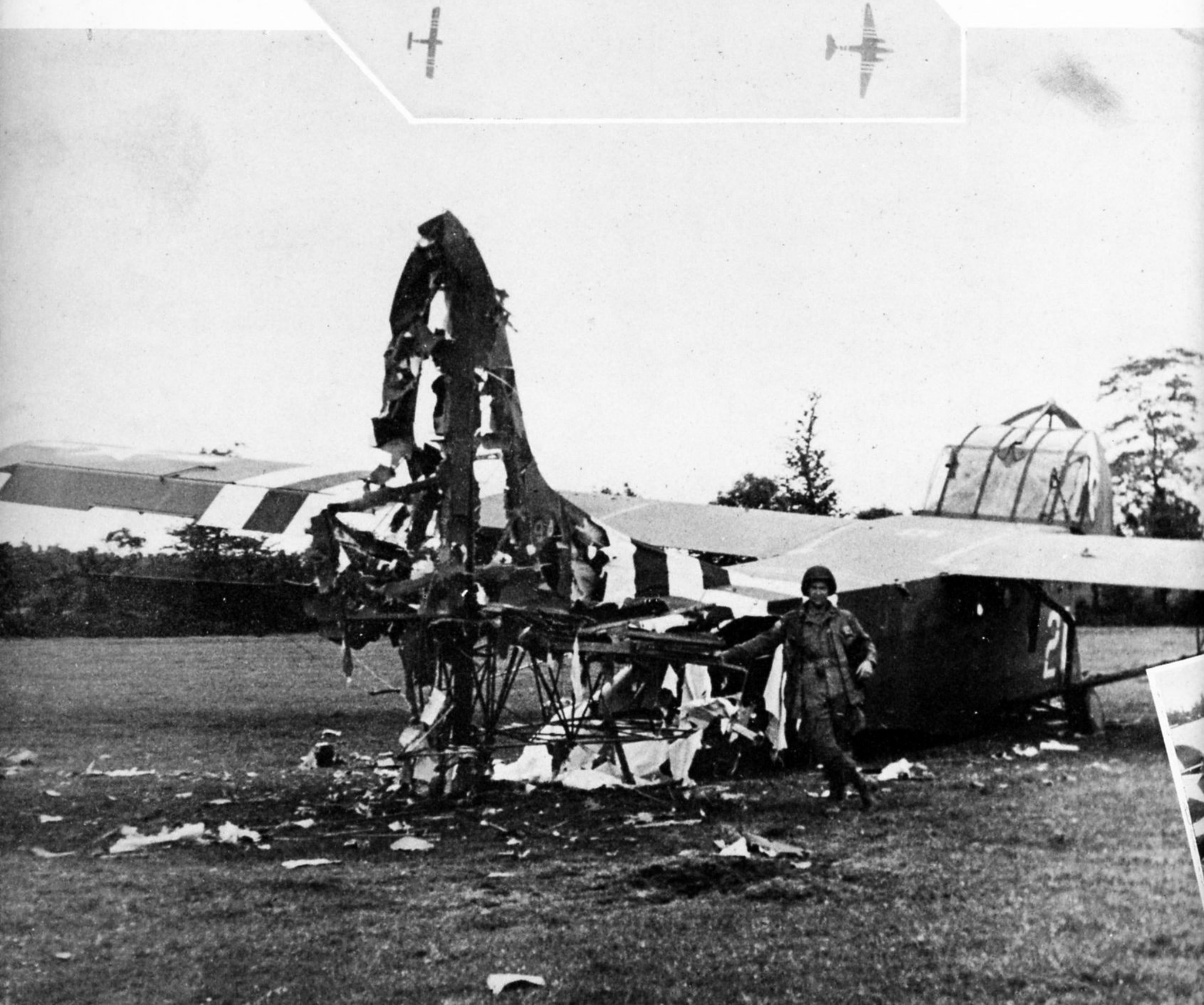

MP
Bill Mauldin
Copr. 1945 by United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
3-27

"It's best not to speak to paratroopers about saluting. They always ask where you got your jump boots."

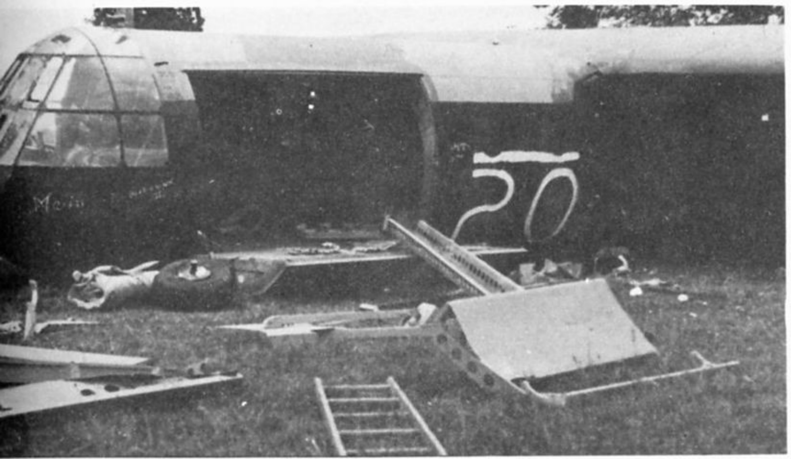
THE GLIDER INVASION OF Normandy

was a battle of hedge rows, 88's, river crossings, flooded fields and Glider crashes. Here the 1st night glider invasion in history was staged. here 82nd glidermen suffered 11% casualties on the landings alone.



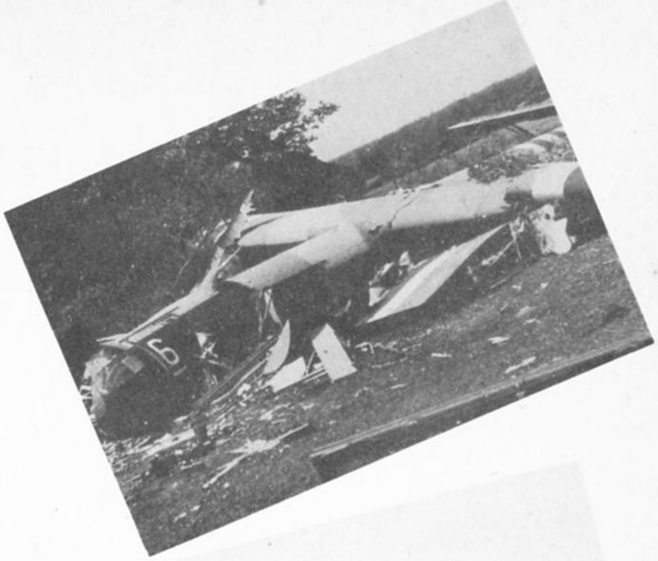


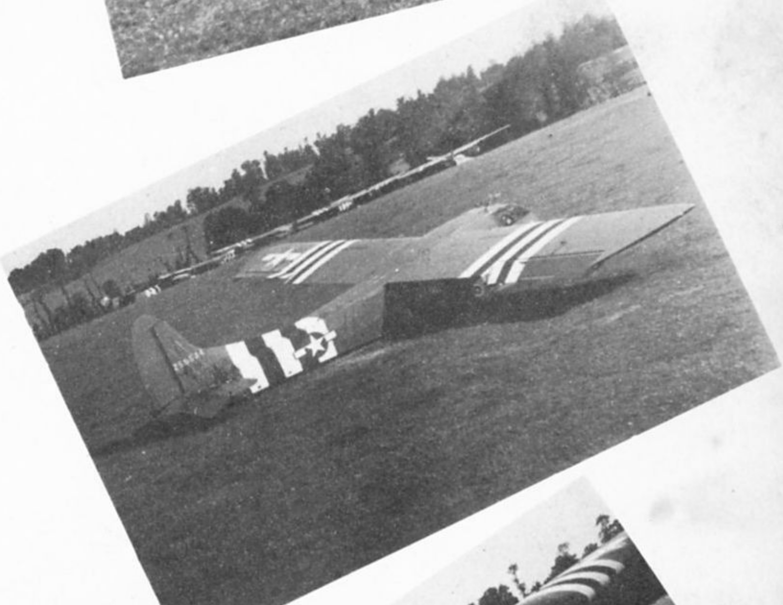
Fields were small — hedgerows, houses, jagged poles and antiaircraft were formidable obstacles.

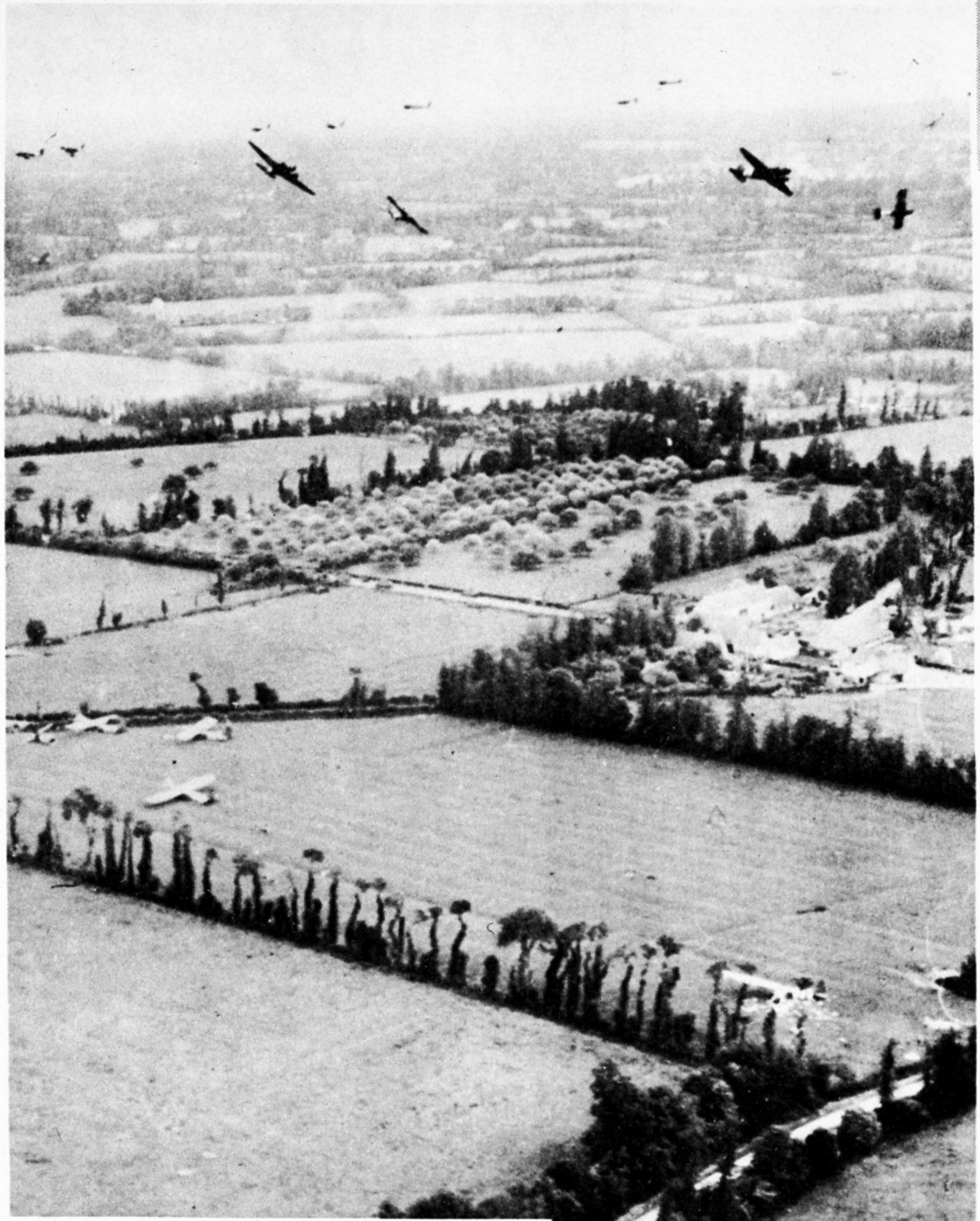


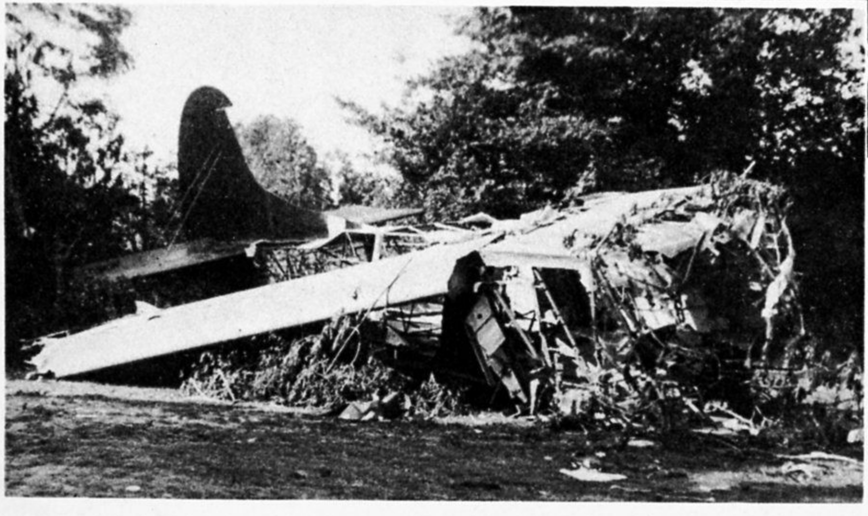
Large English Horsas crashed in even greater numbers than our American gliders.

Some gliders landed perfectly but many more did not.









And the gliders came by dawn, to reinforce the fatigued paratroopers. Not a few of them, however, crashed on landing, like the one at left, or were riddled in the air.

Normandy

D-DAY BY GLIDER

FROM TODAY's battlefield a new hero has emerged to share in the glory and limelight bestowed upon elite elements of the nation's fighting forces. His job has the toughness and misery of the infantry. Landing casualties are higher than among parachutists and "esprit de corps" surpasses even the colorful marines. He is the fighting gliderman — an infantryman who gets in more tough spots in less time by sailing over enemy defenses in a paper mache "flakhack."

Battle-toughened veterans of the "All-American" 82nd Airborne Division's glider units served as guinea pigs in helping to perfect and prove gliderborne infantry. Their ranks have been thinned by the savage fighting at the Salerno beachhead in Italy, the airborne invasion of Normandy, the "battle for bridges" in Holland, the "battle of the bulge" in Belgium and the cracking of the Siegfried Line in Germany. The toughest glider landing of all was Normandy. Here the 1st night glider landings in this or any war were made. Here eleven percent of all gliderman were casualties on the landings alone.

In the invasion of Normandy, pathfinders jumped with the paratroopers to check the area and guide the two planes over the landing zone. They found the previously selected areas heavily minded with poles, trees and other obstacles dotting the few open fields. Gliders were already winging their way over the Channel when word was received of the change in landing zones and Providence must have been watching over the men as the gliders swooped down to crash land in garden-size fields surrounded by the maize of hedgerows. The over-loaded "flakhacks" smashed into one another, ripped through hedgerows and spread men, equipment and debris in unbelievable confusion. One glider out of four set-down without appreciable damage. Surprisingly enough, a very high percentage of the men crawled out of the wreckage to salvage vital equipment and set out on their prearranged assignments.

While crossing the Channel the nose of a glider came unlatched leaving a yawning gap between the pilot's control section and the cargo compartment. The pilot and co-pilot swung periously in mid-air in the nose section. All efforts to re-hook the nose failed, but the glidermen were able to anchor the nose section while the pilot struggled to keep the frail craft in the air. The plane and glider returned to an airfield in England. Within a short time they were again headed toward Normandy. Six days later the sergeant who had been glider commander, led his small group of glidermen back to the unit. His glider had been cut loose nearly 70 miles from the landing zone deep in enemy territory. The sergeant and his men had slipped through enemy lines, contacted the British forces near Caen, France. During the 33 days of almost continuous attacking, the glidermen spearheaded many of the pushes which drove across the Douve and Merderet Rivers, and cut the Cherbourg Peninsula bottling-up German forces around Cherbourg, then swung inland parallel to the coast to take the high ground overlooking La Haye du Puits. The glidermen fought throughout the campaign without reinforcements. One company came out of the fighting with only six men.

At one point the fiery little commander of the 325 Glider Infantry and his wire crew moved down a lane aggressively. Sniper fire zipped all around and artillery shells began dropping in dangerously close. The Colonel had his phone connected and called a battalion commander asking for coordinates of the battalion's new command post. These were given and the position located on the map. The Colonel snorted, "Move forward 600 yards and bring your battalion along." The jeep driver had turned down the wrong lane and taken the Colonel several hundred yards out in front of the lines. The Colonel waited right there for the unit to advance.

Command posts are always close to the front lines in typical airborne fashion. During combat the officers lead their men instead of directing action from a relatively safe rear area. In one of the 325 battalions, two commanding officers have been killed in action, two others seriously wounded and evacuated to the United States and two more including the present commander, have been wounded five times. A total of 13 Purple hearts or oak leaf clusters have been earned by the commanders of this one battalion alone.

By Ray West.

HIGH FLIGHT

by

JOHN MAGEE
Flight Officer R. C. A. F.

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And have danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air . . .

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle flew—
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

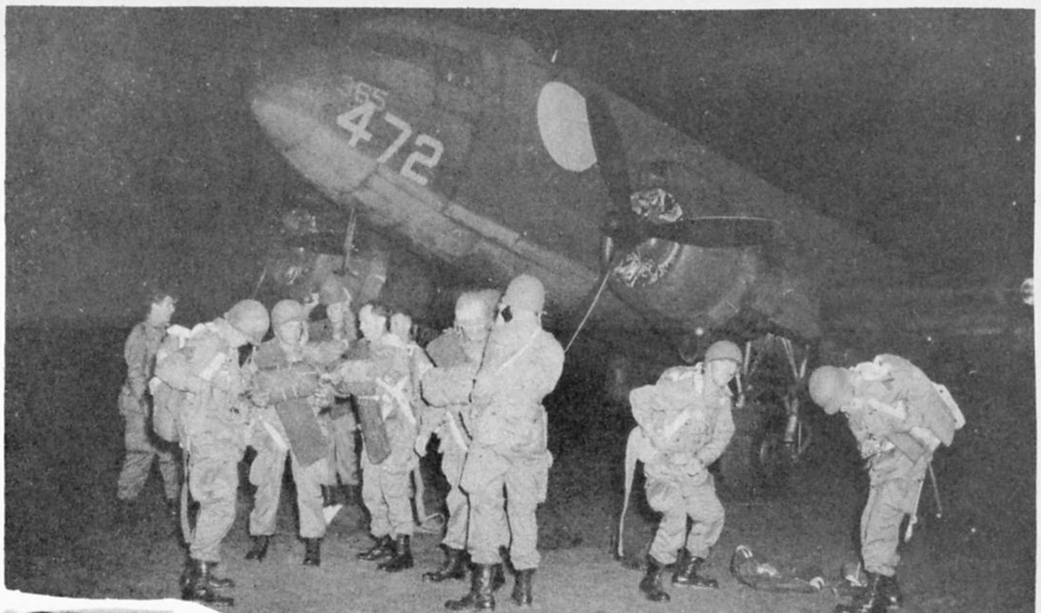
NORMANDY

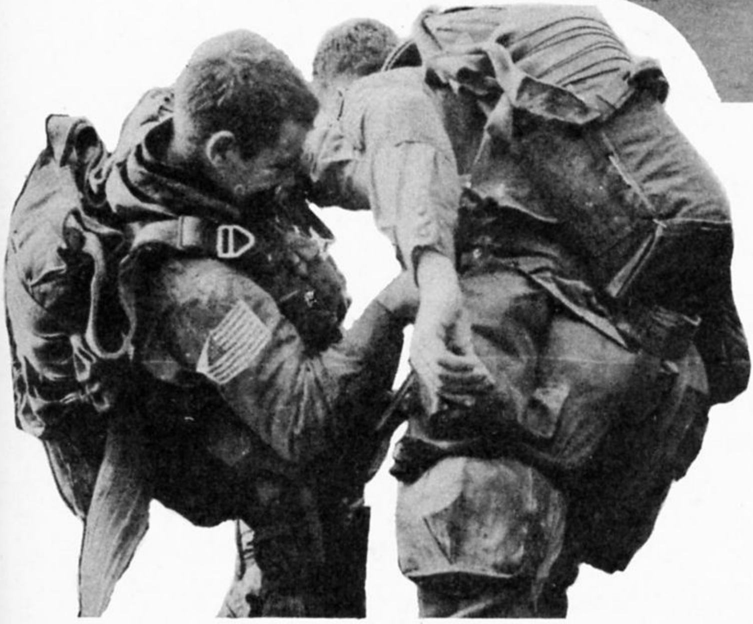
A story of Hedgerows, 88's, Glider crashes, and flooded fields—46% were casualties in 33 days of furious fighting.

During these 33 days the Veteran 82nd Airborne Division liberated the first town on the Western front (Ste. Mere Eglise, 4 hrs. before the beach forces landed on D-Day, June 6, 1944), and engaged 5 different enemy divisions including the 91st, 243rd, 77th, 265th and 353rd virtually destroying the 91st, and 265th as effective fighting units. The Division destroyed 62 German tanks and knocked out 44 antitank and artillery guns.

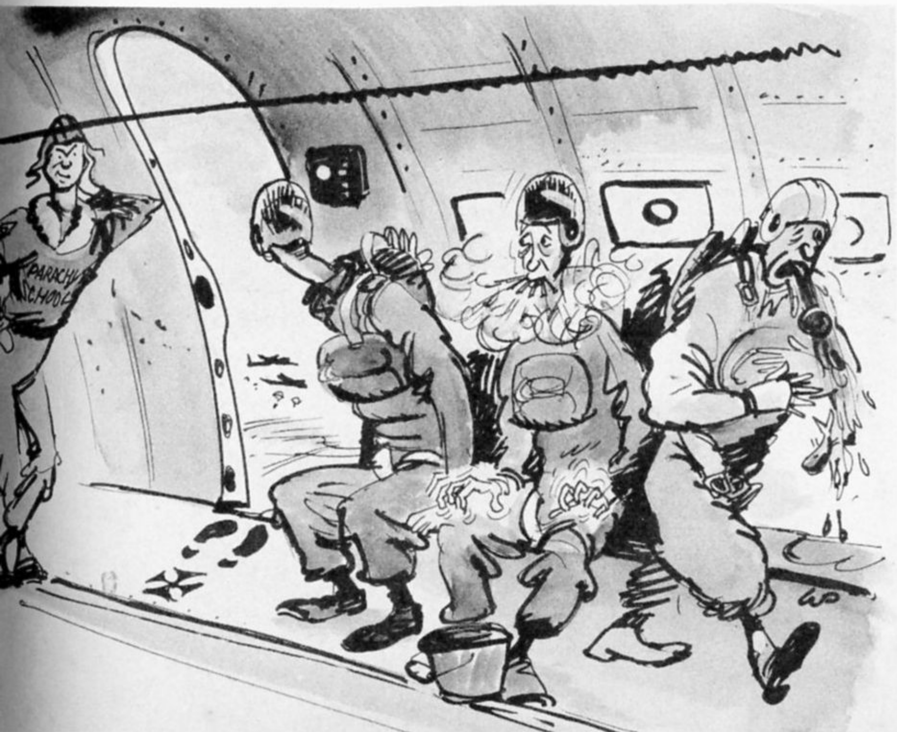
The initial crossing of the flooded Douve and Merderet Rivers was made by the "All Americans" early in the Normandy campaign.

Hard hitting paratroops buckling on their parachutes prior to boarding transports that dropped them in Hitler's France.

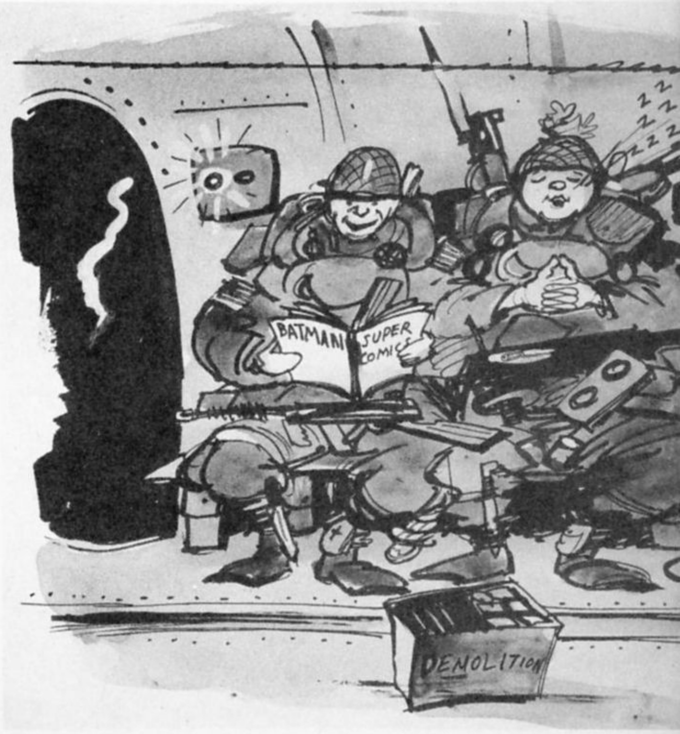




A major part of the pain on any mission was caused by the bulky paratroop equipment on the ride. Here two boys struggle into their tight harness.


PARACHUTE SCHOOL

D STAGE


ZZZ
BATMAN
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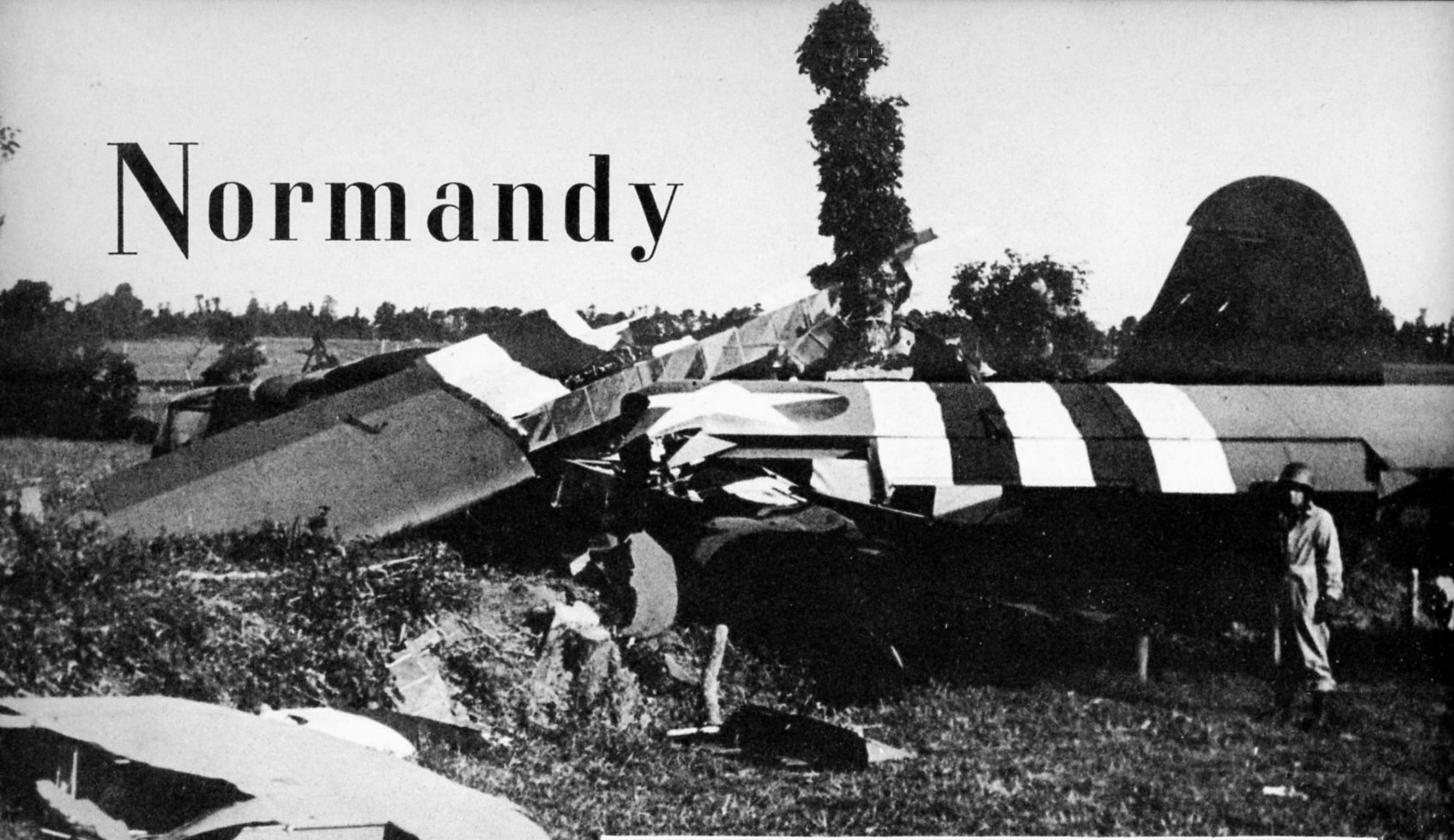
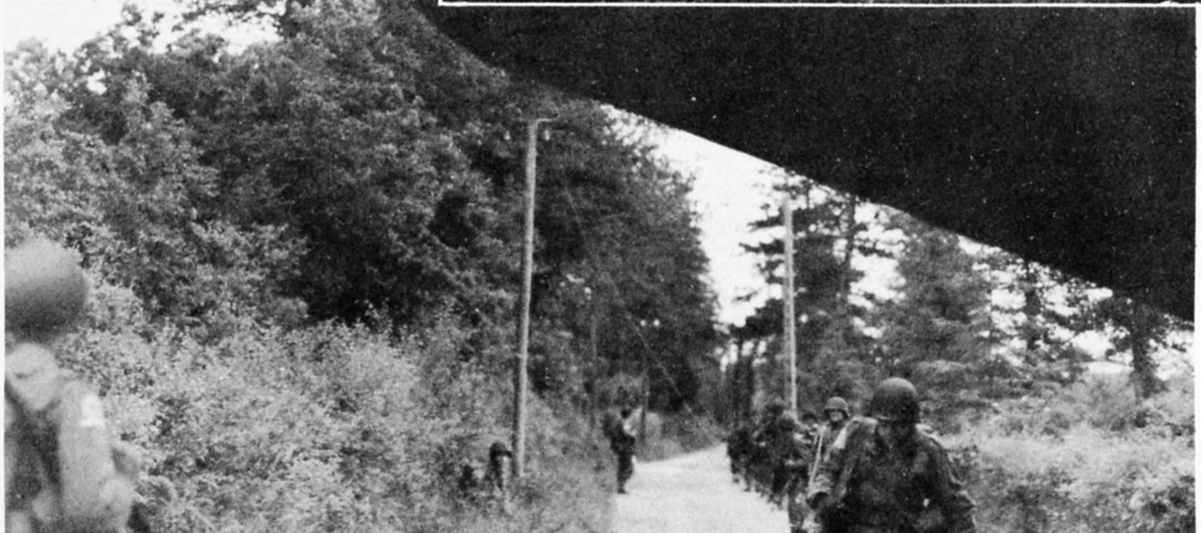
D DAY

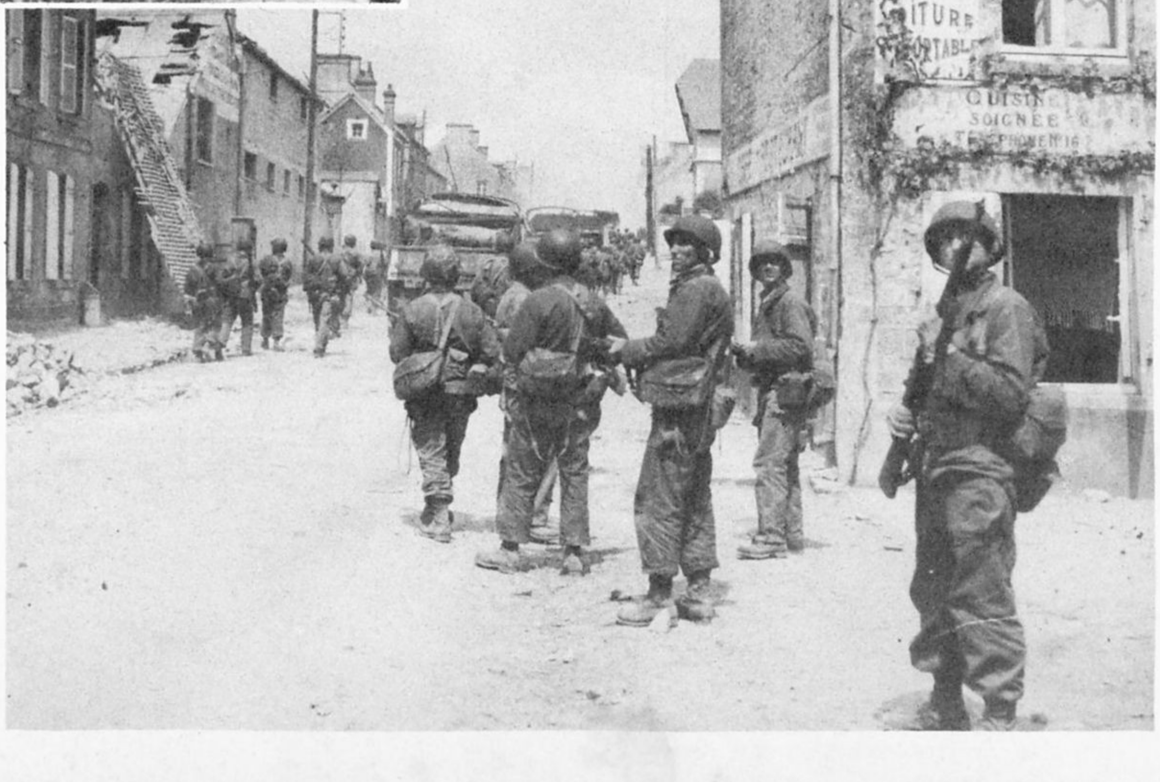
Normandy



A crashed glider (above)
A crashed transport (right)
and marching men (below)



The artillery sounds off, the infantry advances, often obtaining needed information from the natives, and (below) the little Norman town of Ste. Mere Eglise is entered.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Normandy

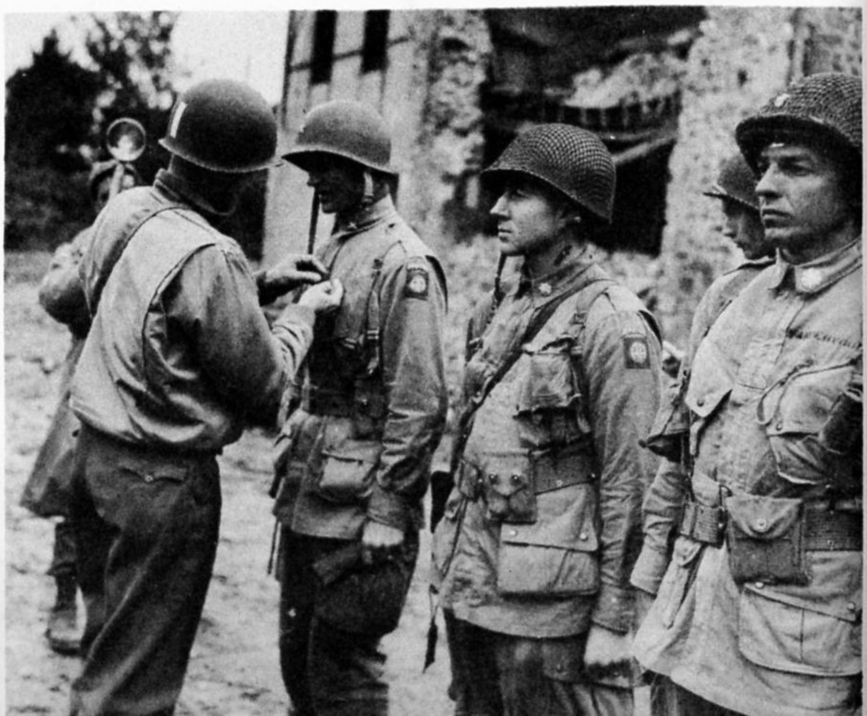
Glider men advance.

Interrogating natives.

Peaceful scene before invasion.

French women tend 82nd grave.

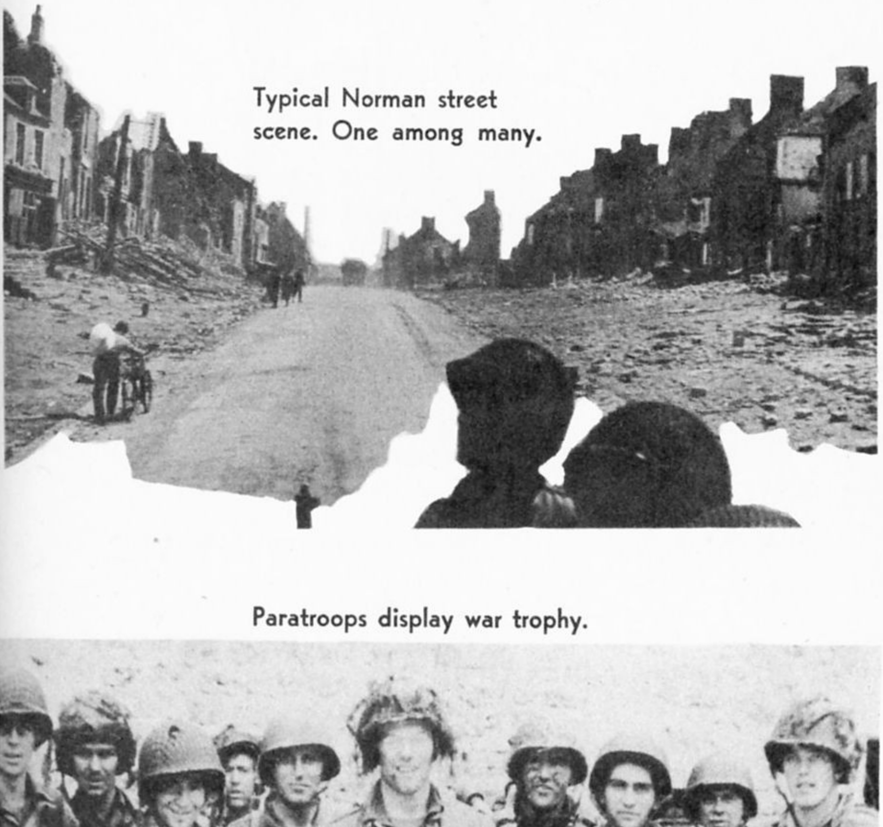
Fraternizing in France.



Lt. Gen. Bradley decorates Brig. Gen. Gavin, Lt. Col. Krause and Lt. Col. Vandevoort.

The pause that refreshes after dusty march.

Blasted church.



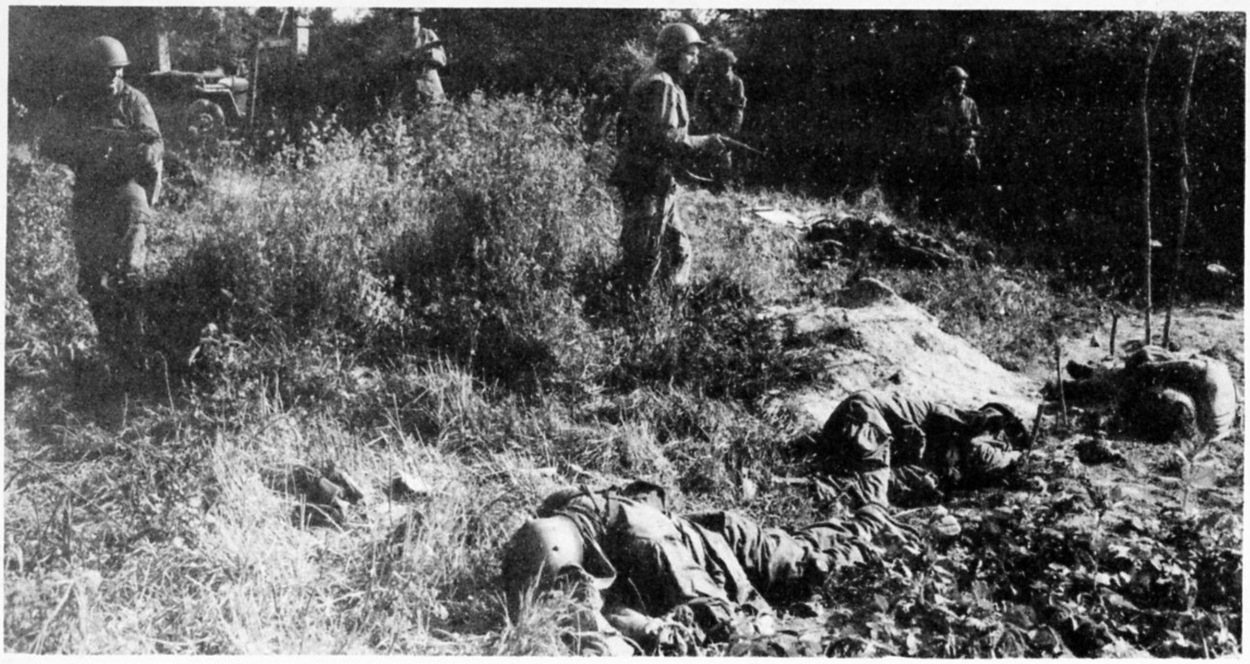
Typical Norman street scene. One among many.

Carrying on despite wounds.

Paratroops display war trophy.

Nazi teller mine goes off.

Normandy



Eager for revenge, paratroops move past dead comrades looking for snipers.

Dead Krauts in a Ditch

The German was Never a Weak Enemy

Excerpts from the fanatical German parachutist's creed

You are the chosen ones of the German Army. You will seek combat and train yourself to endure any manner of test. To you the battle shall be the fulfilment.

Cultivate true comradeship, for by the aid of your comrades you will conquer or die.

Beware of talking. Be not corruptible. Men act while women chatter. Chatter may bring you to the grave.

Be calm and prudent, strong and resolute. Valour and the enthusiasm of an offensive spirit will cause you to prevail in the attack.

The most precious thing in the presence of the foe is ammunition. He who shoots uselessly, merely to comfort himself, is a man of straw. He is a weakling who merits not the title of parachutist.

Never surrender. To you death or victory must be a point of honour.

You can triumph only if our weapons are good. See to it that you submit yourself to this law—first my weapons and then myself.

You must grasp the full purport of every enterprise, so that if your leader be killed you can yourself fulfill it.

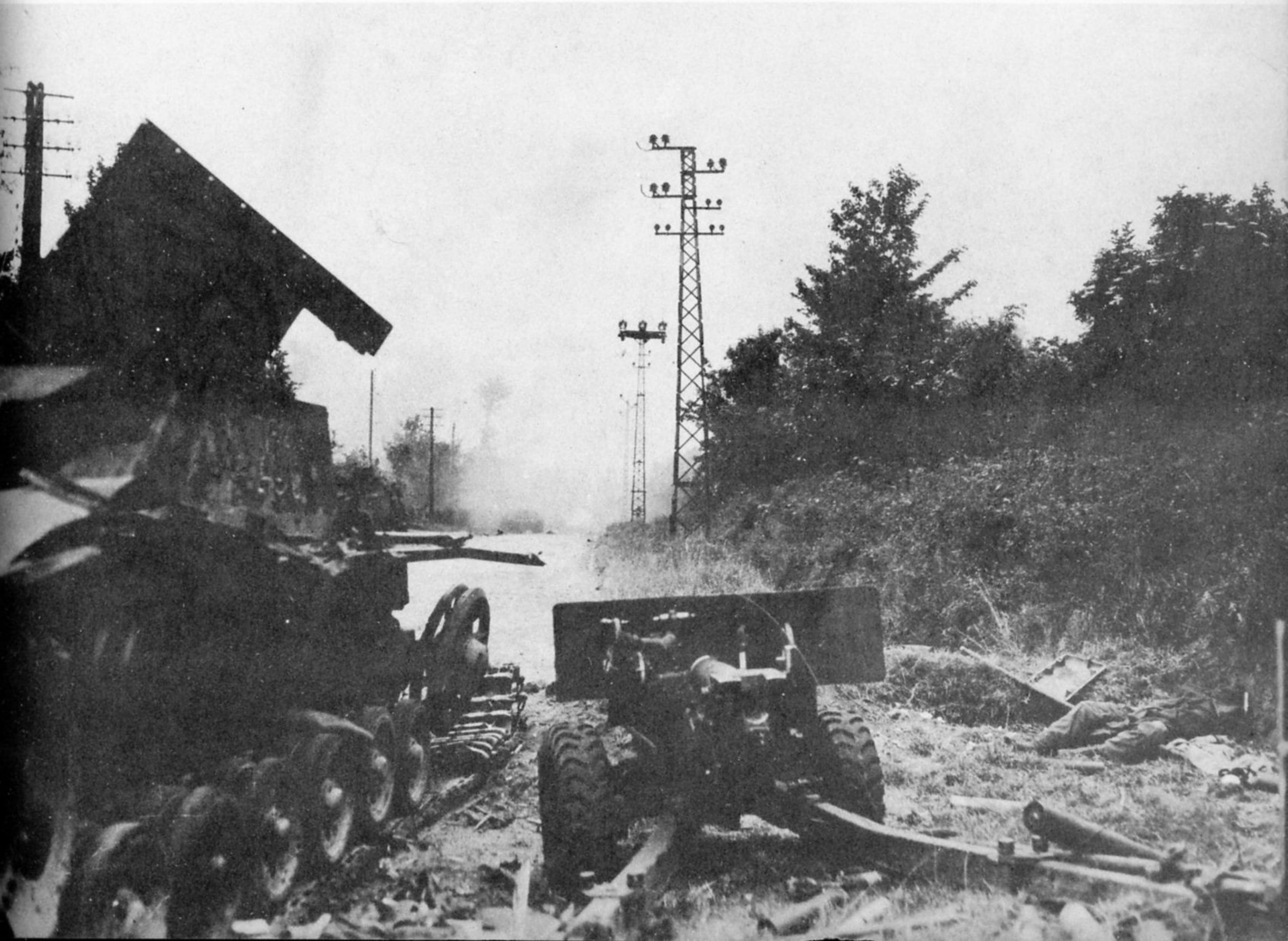
Against an open foe fight with chivalry, but to a guerrilla extend no quarter.

Keep your eyes wide open. Tune yourself to the topmost pitch. Be as nimble as a greyhound, as tough as leather, as hard as Krupp steel, and so you shall be the German Warrior incarnate.

Tanks reach the 82nd!

Sherman tanks roll in to help after breaking through from the beach.

An antitank gun guards a key road block beside a German tank.



Our wounded and solid ranks of prisoners formed never-ending lines to the rear. The 82nd medics performed miracles under impossible circumstances, proving their efficiency under intense fire.

Normandy

Above: Tanks helped us after the initial battles.

Right: Slain Germans sleep.

The beachhead was well secured and going strong when the 82nd went back to England.

Normandy

1944

It is for those who died we sing
The swan-song of the great:
It is for those who wounded lay—
For those who kept the date;
It is for every one who went
To test the rules of fate:

We give them what is due each man
Who crossed that awful shore;
Who dared the flame of circum-
stance—
Defied the battle's roar:
We hail who loved their lives no less
But loved their country more!

•

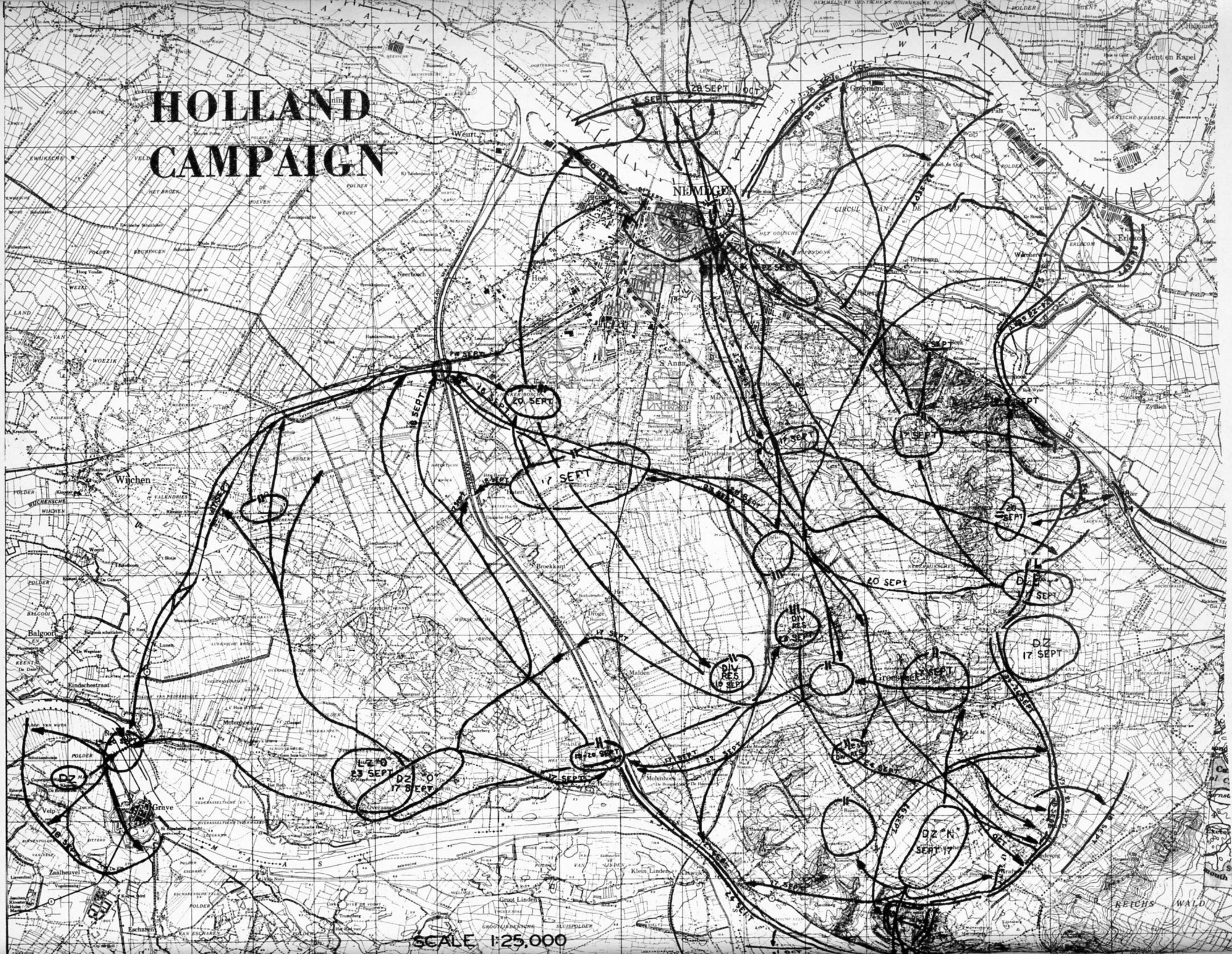
WILLIAM L. EMBRY

•

HOLLAND

For action in Holland the Eighty-second Airborne Division was awarded the Netherlands highest decoration, the royal order of William Nassau, thus becoming the first foreign unit to receive such an honor.

HOLLAND CAMPAIGN


NIJMEGEN
Groesbeek
Grave
Wijchen
Balgooi
Heumen
Malden
Erlecom
Reichs Wald
WAAL
MAAS
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DZ "O" 17 SEPT
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DIV RES
17 SEPT
20 SEPT
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22 SEPT
24 SEPT
28 SEPT
28 SEPT 1 OCT
29 SEPT
SCALE 1:25,000

"I'm proud to meet the Commanding General of the finest Division in the world today."

—Lt. General Sir Miles Dempsey,
Commanding British 2nd Army in Holland.

INVASION of

THE FIRST large scale operation of the First Allied Airborne Army, after its organization in August, 1944, was the sky invasion of Holland on September 17, 1944, when the U. S. 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, with the British First Airborne Division, were to clear the way for the British Second Army's drive into Germany.

The immediate objectives were the key Dutch communication cities of Eindhoven, Nijmegen and Arnhem, control of which would place the mouth of the Rhine in Allied hands, cutting off main German forces in Western Holland and placing Allied armies in a position to advance quickly into Germany.

Troop Carrier planes took off from their English bases for Holland shortly before noon on September 17, and special pathfinder planes dropped their "sticks" of paratroopers over drop zones at 1300 hours. All afternoon a continuous skytrain of C-47's and gliders passed overhead on their way to the Holland-Germany landing area. By nightfall, almost the entire airborne army was on enemy-held soil attacking its first objectives, the bridges and road in the Arnhem, Nijmegen, Eindhoven areas.

The 82nd Airborne Division landed in the Nijmegen area, captured the town and the tactically important surrounding terrain.

The 101st Airborne Division made contact with the Guards Armored division, despite stiff resistance, at 1100 hours of D plus one at the village of Vieuw Acht, and by noon had occupied Eindhoven.

The First British Airborne division, dropped and landed west of Arnhem, ran into bitter opposition almost immediately. The First Parachute Brigade succeeded in reaching the north end of the road bridge over the Neder Rijn but was unable to take it against German forces at the south end. The bridge, however, was not blown, and paratroopers removed the charges. Next morning, severe fighting was taking place at Arnhem, and contact with the brigade was lost. This was the beginning of the stand of the Red Devils in Arnhem pocket.

The part of the veteran 82nd Airborne Division played in this great Airborne invasion of the lowlands is best told by War Correspondent Martha Gellhorn in her Collier's Magazine article, "Rough and Tumble," radioed from Holland during the campaign:

ROUGH AND TUMBLE

By Martha Gellhorn

The troops of the 82nd Airborne Division look like tough boys, and they are. They are good at their trade, too, and they know it, and they walk as if they knew it. This trade is war: most of them are too young to have learned any other profession.

The general, who is himself thirty-seven, received many official communications about the soldiers' voting act and how soldiers were not to be influenced and how ballots were to be made available, and all of this was evidently most important, though in the middle of the campaign in Holland it was perhaps hard to attend to these matters.

Anyhow, quite worked up and conscious of his duty, he went around to the battalions to see that all was in order, and discovered that in one company only two men were old enough to vote and that this odd state of affairs was the usual form in his outfit. Finally, after a careful check-up, it was learned that the average age of the 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers is twenty-two, and if you subtract two or three years for Army life you will see that these young men have not had much time to study any subject except the technique, mechanic and principles of killing other men.

They walk as if they know how good

the LOWLANDS...

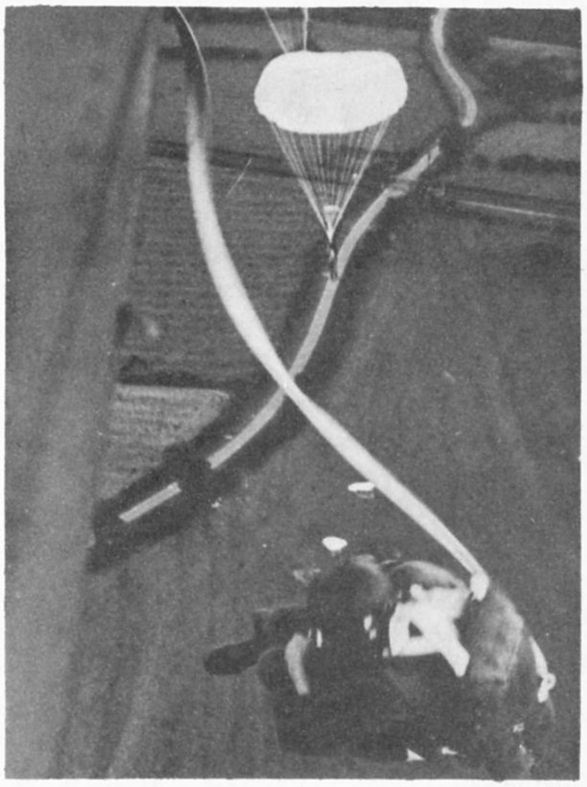
they are, and they walk like individual men. All combat troops have a special pride and style. All combat troops despise garrison life and garrison soldiers, and all combat troops look like something very rare and would shock anyone with stern ideas about uniforms and compartment. But these airbornes seem to me even more remarkable than most and, seeing them now, you notice every face, for every face is that of an entire man, and you notice that each man wears his soiled and baggy clothing as if it had been designed for him alone and was not Army issue at all.

These rainy days, the 82nd Airborne Division is sweating it out in Holland. It rains now in Holland, Belgium and France and very likely in all the other countries. I have not lately seen. (In Italy, too—oh, most miserably there! — and in those bridgeheads into Germany and all through the Balkans.) This rain is the heartbreak rain that washes away men's hope of peace and home, and it is the rain which warns you of the ugly winter ahead—another ugly winter of war.

In this rain, in the flat, dreary country of southern Holland, the paratroopers live and now fight a deadly little nibbling campaign which is not their style, and they do not complain, since they are tough boys and not given to complaint. Besides, they are volunteers, and a volunteer is a man who says to himself that he damn' well got into this and there is no use beefing, and where do we go from here?

But, before this Dutch campaign temporarily slowed down into fox holes and artillery duels and mortar fire and night patrols, it was one of the boldest and most spectacular attacks of this war, and it suited the 82nd Airborne Division perfectly.

On the 17th September, three airborne divisions parachuted and glided into Holland. There were the American 82nd and 101st, and the famous First British which dropped on Arnhem. But, this is a story about the 82nd and, though a campaign means a mass of men all vital to one another and to success, and though from the workshop mechanics who repair tanks to the stretcher-bearers, to the signal corps linesmen, to the cooks, each man is essential, one needs a book to tell about them all.



Probably each tank crew and each infantry platoon deserves at least a book to pay them proper honor, and I am filled with wonder for every one of the anonymous and modest men who do this deadly, exhausting work of war as if it were not too hard and as if they expected no thanks. So, this paragraph is merely a poor and quick recognition of all those one leaves unmentioned, not because they are lesser but because they are too many.

On September 17th, the 82nd Division boarded hundreds of planes and half a hundred gliders, left England and flew in formation at a fixed altitude and speed across the Channel and over the dunes of the Dutch coast. Here the flak began, and the endless flying wedge of transport planes and the gliders with men crowded in those canvas cockleshells without parachutes moved through the sky like an enormous

procession of clay pigeons. It took thirty-five minutes for this fleet of planes to pass any given point on the ground—in short, thirty-five minutes for the flak batteries to get the proper range.

If one has not made such a ride, one could not presume to imagine what any man felt or thought while doing it. There was fighter cover and luck and whatever else there was, and the losses en route were slight. Above Grave, and north and south of Groesbeek, the parachutists jumped, and the sky flowered with thousands of swaying silk water-lily leaves. If you see a picture of it — for pictures were made — you will think you never saw anything lovelier in your life.

On the other hand, every man hanging like a little dark pencil beneath his parachute must have been filled with a strange surmise, to say the least. Then the gliders came in, and some turned over, and some landed on their noses, and most of them made it all right. The troops kicked their way out of the thin canvas ships, and again, wondrously, the casualties of the landings were very light.

The 82nd had, as its mission, to hold the Grave and Nijmegen as well as a couple of subsidiary bridges over a canal to the east of Grave. The Grave and Nijmegen bridges are huge steel-girdered structures spanning the Maas and the Waal. The roads are either raised up on dikes, or they are narrow flat strips passing through bare country which gives no cover. The two rivers are broad, between high banks, and at Nijmegen the Germans had a most convenient fort which commanded the approaches to the railroad bridge and the road bridge. There was, likewise, the enemy in force and determined and well equipped; there was, for a change, German aviation.

There were seven German counterattacks on Nijmegen. At one time, the 82nd Division had 2,200 prisoners who were being guarded by American glider pilots, the only men who could not be spared; they had hundreds of their own paratroopers wounded; they were at half strength and being attacked by the Germans in regimental strength from the north and the south while they held the tiny island of Nijmegen, about as practical a place to hold as a sandbar with the tide coming in.

Or, perhaps the difficulty of the whole operation is best demonstrated by the manner in which the great Nijmegen bridge was taken. You must now imagine a very American-looking bridge—no quaint little arched stone job, but a double-lane roadway which, I believe, some proud Dutchman told me was the second longest bridge in Holland. The dynamite charges to blow this bridge were cemented into the structure and, to give you some idea of the size and intricacy of the steel construction, eight Germans were captured from their hiding places in the under girders, after the bridge was taken. The approaches to this bridge were hopelessly exposed to machine-gun fire on both banks, as well as artillery and mortar fire.

One regiment of the 82nd Division, the 504th, crossed the Waal to the west of the bridge in collapsible boats in the middle of the afternoon on a fine clear day. The Guards Armored Division of the British Second Army gave them the boats. One of the Guards officers remarked afterward that it seemed absolutely suicidal, as the Americans had never seen these boats and did not know how to launch them, but when that point was brought up, the Americans answered that they guessed it would be all right, and when asked whether they weren't concerned with the number of boats available, they answered again that they reckoned the English would do the best they could.

Some time later, in a thoroughly unlikable little piece of Germany which they were then holding, I met some of the paratroopers who made that river crossing. One of them said the final words about it: "There were three men paddling, and the prow of that boat just stood up straight in the water. I wasn't even scared; I just gave up hope."

The regiment did cross the river and climbed a steep bank on which the Germans were well and truly ensconced, and they fought their way down along the shore to secure the north end of the bridge. The Irish Guards tanks lined up and became artillery, lobbing shells over to cover this amazing operation. Meantime, the Guards Armored Division fought in Nijmegen to clear the southern entry to the bridge. Elements of the 508th Regiment had been in Nijmegen on the evening of D-Day but were withdrawn to secure the landing fields for the Glider Field Artillery Units coming in on D plus 1. The 2nd Battalion of the 505th Parachute Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division fought with the Guards. A Guards officer said, "You could see them fighting from the housetops, just swarming over them. They were absolutely splendid; wonderful sight seeing all those chaps swarming over the roofs."

The mission of the 82nd Airborne Division in Holland, which takes only one sentence to write and only a minute to say aloud, was completed in three fierce and sleepless days. It was entirely and successfully completed with a total of five bridges and a piece of essential ground taken. Then, it became necessary to hold, and they are holding still—sweating it out in the long rain that means another ugly winter of war.

This is the fourth campaign for the 82nd Airborne Division, which has to its credit more campaigns and more combat time than any other American airborne division. They first jumped in Sicily, which was quite a mix-up from all accounts, due to the fact that they were not dropped where planned or anywhere near where planned. They fought for two weeks, during which time there was the small incident of the captain who hired some rowboats and went out and took three islands off the Sicilian coast.

They left Sicily a month later, and the next time they jumped was a hurry call to get in behind the beachhead at Salerno, when it looked as if that murderous battle was going to fail. One regiment of the 82nd was on the ground behind the beaches at Salerno, exactly twelve hours after receiving the order to move, and this, too, is some kind of a record.

They fought with the English up to Naples, sharing the surrender of that city, and thence on to the Volturno River. The 504th Regiment fought at the juncture of the Fifth and Eighth Armies in Italy, in those beautiful, hated mountains near Cassino. After this, it was shipped by sea to Anzio, where it fought for sixty-nine days on that shelled mud flat.

The next jump was in Normandy, in the early dark of the morning before H-Hour of D-Day. This was also the first night glider landing in the European theater and perhaps the first anywhere. It does not need much imagination to think what that was like. For thirty-three days, the division fought on the Cherbourg Peninsula, and it is credited with the destruction of an entire German division. And there was Holland.

The 82nd is a very proud outfit, having earned the right to this pride. They do not boast when they say that where they fight, they fight without relief or replacements and that they have never relinquished a foot of ground.

This tells you something about them, but not nearly enough. From the general on down, they are all extraordinary characters and each one's story is worth telling, for men who jump out of airplanes onto hostile territory do not have dull lives. My favorite characters are Private Bachenheimer and his friends and assistants who are known as "Bill One" and "Bill Two." They may not be typical of anything, for I certainly never saw their like before, but perhaps they only have flourished and had their being in just such an outfit as the 82nd.

Private Bachenheimer is twenty-one and tall and solid, with a dark short mat of hair and bright small eyes and a curly mouth, and he became a United States citizen at Fort Bragg while he was training to be a paratrooper. Private Bachenheimer was born in Germany and lived there and in Vienna until he was eleven. He speaks Ger-

man perfectly and speaks English delightfully with a very faint accent. His father, who was a pianist and a musical director of opera, is dead now. I do not think a boy could say anything better about his father than what Private Bachenheimer said one day in Nijmegen. "Everyone," he said, "had to love him unless they were greedy or stupid."

Private Bachenheimer began to be famous in his regiment at Anzio, where he was known as a man who never stopped going out on night patrols. This is very unpleasant work, and anyone who volunteers for it steadily is likely to become known. His success was amazing, due to the fact that he thought nothing of going up to Germans in the dark and talking German to them as if he were an old soldier of the *Wehrmacht* himself. There are endless stories about these patrols — about Bachenheimer in a Kraut chow line — Bachenheimer gossiping in a German machine-gun post — Bachenheimer talking busily to German sentries. The work was dangerous, and men got killed on these missions, but Bachenheimer brought the necessary prisoners and information back.

In Holland, he started out again by joining up with a patrol immediately after the landing and walking across the Grave bridge to draw fire. From there on, he continued to Nijmegen which he entered alone and some time ahead of the main body of troops. He had a brisk fight with ten Germans in the railway station and was called upon by the Germans through the loudspeaker, which announces the arrival and departure of trains, to surrender, as the Germans naturally did not imagine that one man alone was putting on this show.

When questioned as to why he undertook this hazardous solitary battle, Bachenheimer said, "Well, this was the first time any of these Dutch saw an American, and it wouldn't look right for the American to run off just as soon as he saw some Germans."

Private Bachenheimer then moved into the headquarters of one of the branches of the Dutch underground, and at their request he took over command. He was very busy sending out patrols to mop up Germans in the town of Nijmegen, and other patrols to get information on German dispositions in the town and around the bridges, so that he could keep his regiment informed. He also opened bakeries and organized civilian billets, and nightly he visited the cellars where the citizens of Nijmegen were living in justifiable fear of the shelling.

That job of maintaining civilian morale is what he is proudest of now. He says he didn't feel any too sure of anything himself, but he made the people believe everything was fine and dandy. I can only say that I think this was a terrific piece of work, because Nijmegen is not fine and dandy now, and it must have been pretty appalling during Bachenheimer's early days there.

His headquarters is a very small crowded room in a former Nijmegen schoolhouse. Bill One, who is Willard Strunk of Abilene, and Bill Two, who is Bill Sellars of Pittsburgh — also old men of twenty-one — work with him in this room. They eat here, and they have a neat, small arsenal hanging on the walls. They collect their souvenirs in one corner, and they have the most fantastic list of callers every day.

I listened to Bachenheimer interrogating an Alsatian prisoner and never saw a prettier or more thorough job; next he received a German informer from whom he wanted to get some information about German defense constructions in the region; then, two sergeants from other regiments who were also engaged in collecting information came and had a brisk argument about a patrol which they wanted Bachenheimer to send out and which he deemed unsound.

English officers, also, arrived from time to time, and Dutch undergrounders and Dutch civilians who wanted to get collaborators arrested or wanted to get people released from jail on the grounds that a mistake had been made. Nothing seemed to worry Bachenheimer, who is an extremely competent and serious boy, and nothing seemed to shake his modesty. His previous training for this work consisted of one job in America—he had briefly been press agent for a show that failed.

Bachenheimer, who has this curious talent for war, is actually a man of peace. "As a matter of fact, I am against war in principle," he said. "I just can't hate anybody."

He was not in his office when I went to say goodby; he had crossed over behind the enemy lines. According to Bachenheimer, it does not take more guts to work behind the enemy lines at night; it just takes a different kind of will. I think it must take a very special kind of guts, as well as a cool and agile mind. But who am I to argue with Bachenheimer?

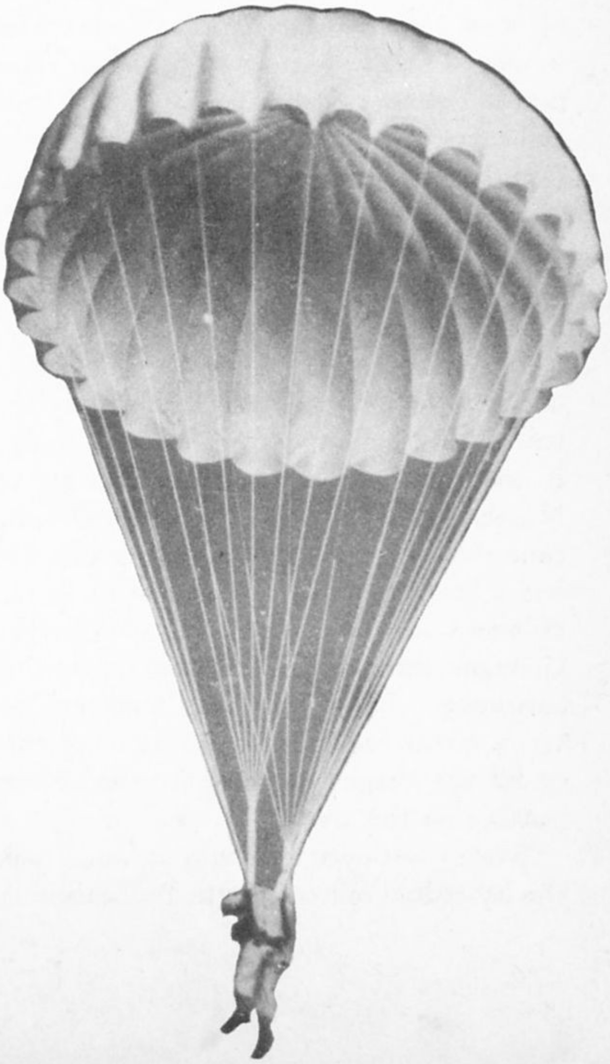
You are always happy with fine combat troops, because in a way no people are as intensely alive as they are. You do not notice the rain too much, or the ugly soaked flat land, or the sadness of the yellowing trees that are rotting limply from summer into the nakedness of winter. You do not think much about what war costs, because you are too busy being alive for the day—too busy laughing and listening and looking. And, you forget about the crude wooden crosses that mark where just such boys lie in Sicily and Italy and France, and now Holland. You forget about the hospital in Nijmegen where devoted, weary men work in operating rooms that never cease to be appalling, no matter how many such operating rooms you have seen. You forget, too, that the boys who last it out intact and whole have nevertheless given up these years which were intended to be young and happy.

The years are gone. But, thinking it over afterward, you wonder what happens to a magnificent division of brave men after the war. And you wonder who is going to thank them, and how, and will it be enough?"

* * *

Miss Gellhorn's story does not go into detail on the long grueling battles fought on the German border or at Kiekberg, Mook, Wyler, and the brilliant use of Anglo-American Artillery in the two months that the 82nd held the Nijmegen salient into Holland and across the German border, but "Rough and Tumble" expresses, better than anything yet written, the esprit de corps, individual bravery, and cocky self-reliance which motivated the men of the 82nd. Theodore Bachenheimer is buried in Holland along with approximately 800 other 82nd troopers. Shortly after Miss Gellhorn's story was written, Bachenheimer was killed while laying a telephone wire to the underground in German occupied northern Holland. He had just received a field commission as a 2nd Lt. when his death occurred. It is one of the great tragedies of war that the percentages of those killed is highest among our youngest and bravest men.

As Winston Churchill said later, speaking of the American and British airborne troops in Holland, "Not in vain may be the pride of those who have survived, the epitaph of those who fell." The campaign in the lowlands had been turned into Allied Victory, but not without cost.



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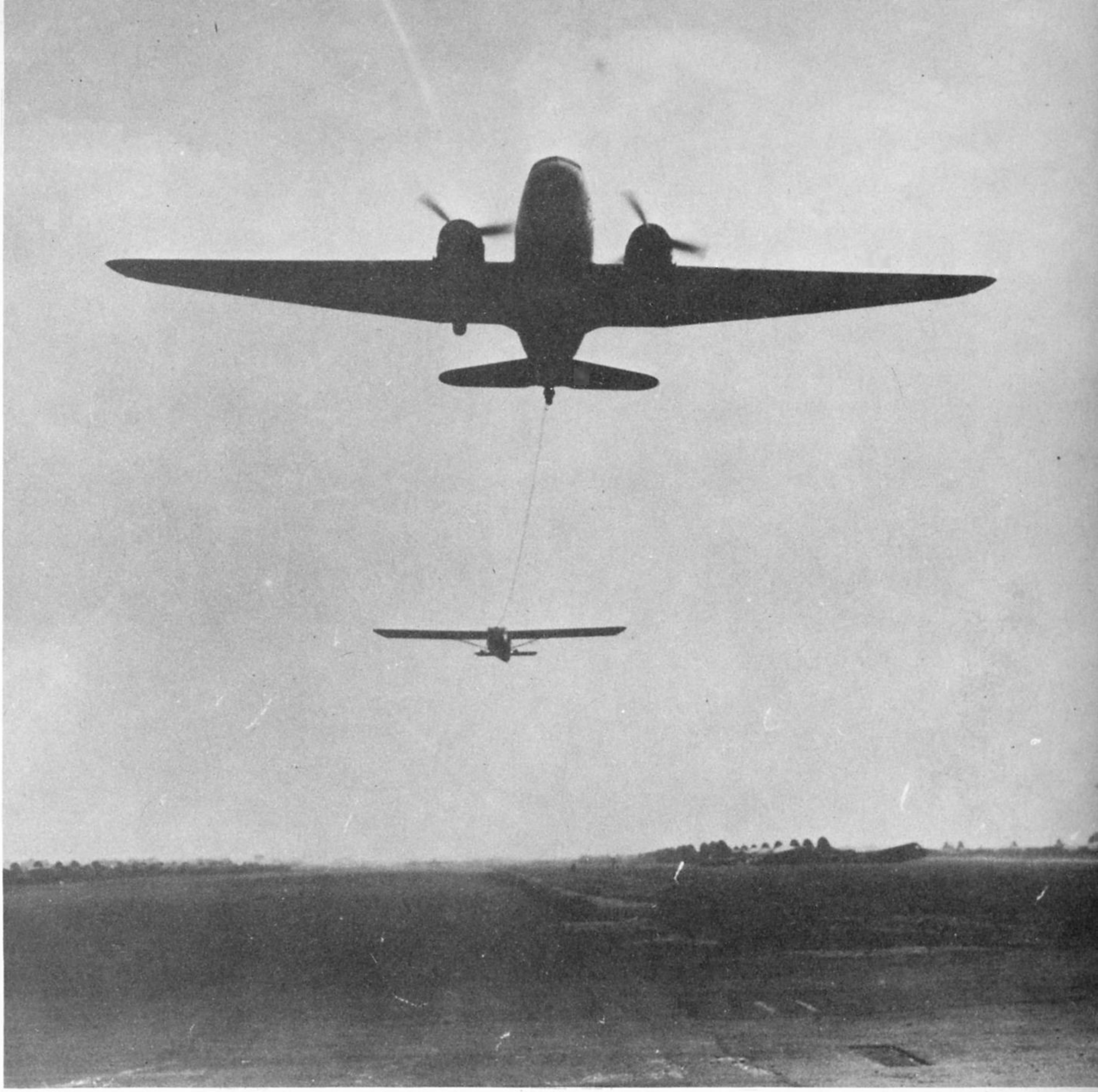
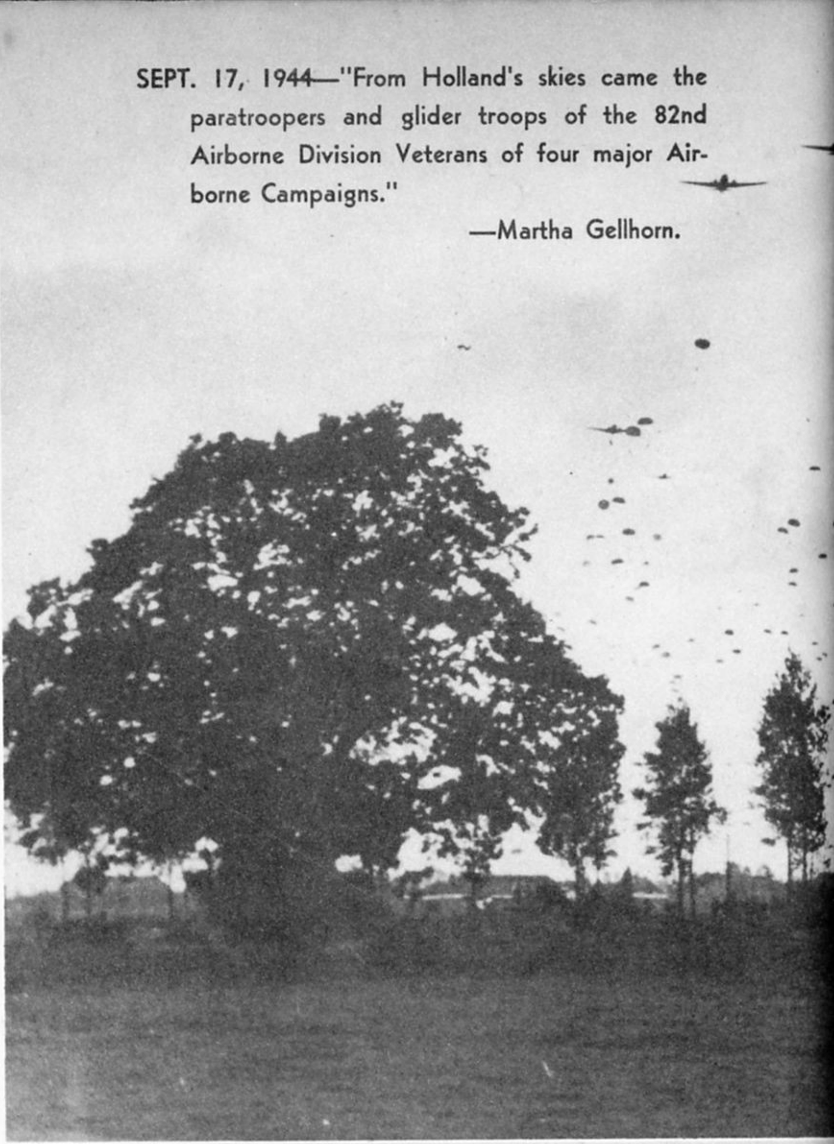


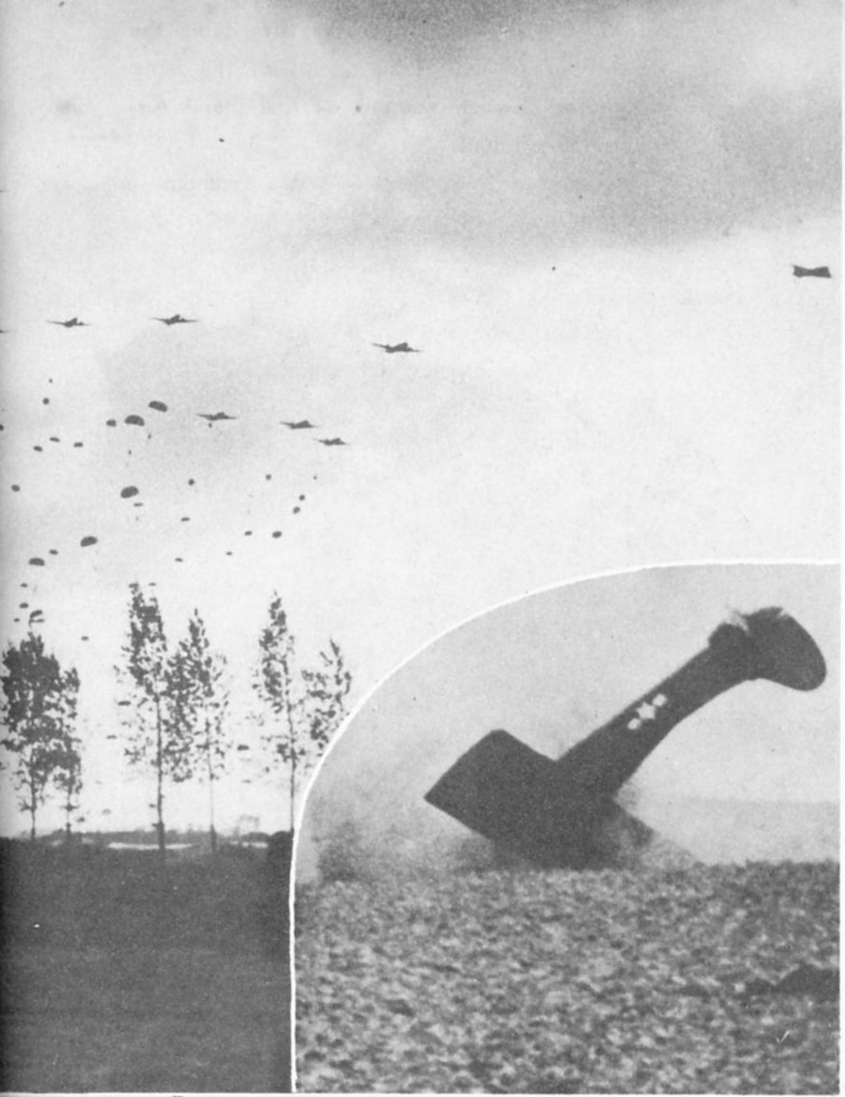
NETHERLANDS BOUND

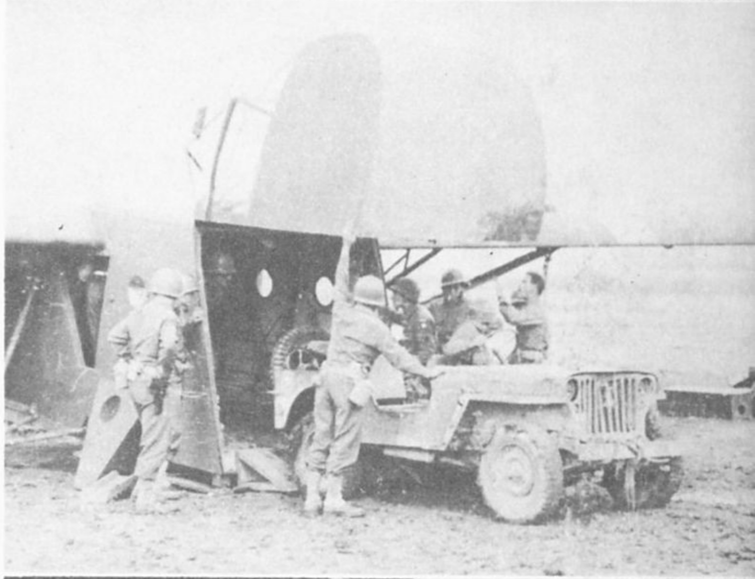
Preparation and take-off from England

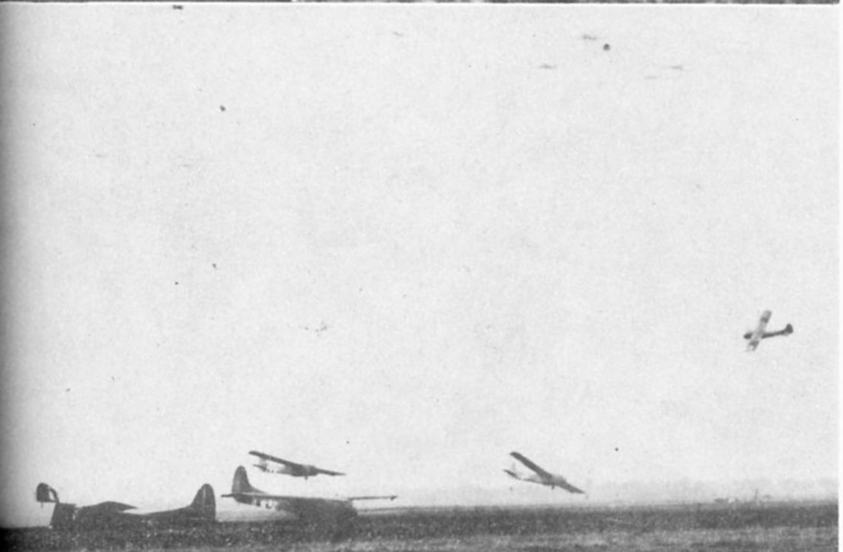
SEPT. 17, 1944—"From Holland's skies came the paratroopers and glider troops of the 82nd Airborne Division Veterans of four major Airborne Campaigns."

—Martha Gellhorn.









Fight for the

PLANNING—
Lt. Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey and Slim Jim Gavin in the Deckenwaal plot the 1st crossing of the Rhine.

PLOTTING—
G-2 plots enemy installations from the edge of the Drop and landing zone H-Hour+1/2.

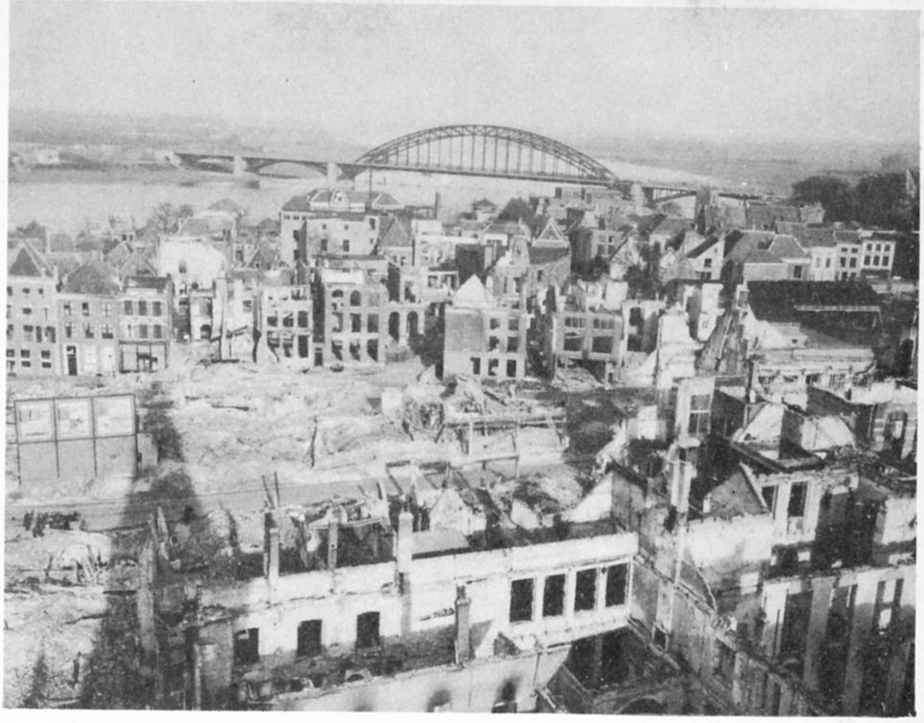
GERMAN "88"—
This high velocity "88" was in the open park before the Waal bridge — fired down the spoke-like roads approaching the bridge.

Bridge

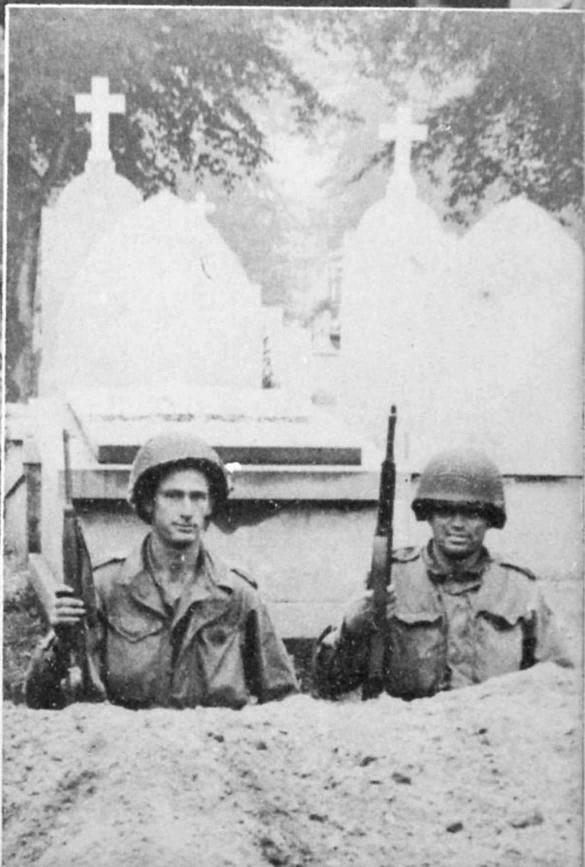
NIJMEGEN

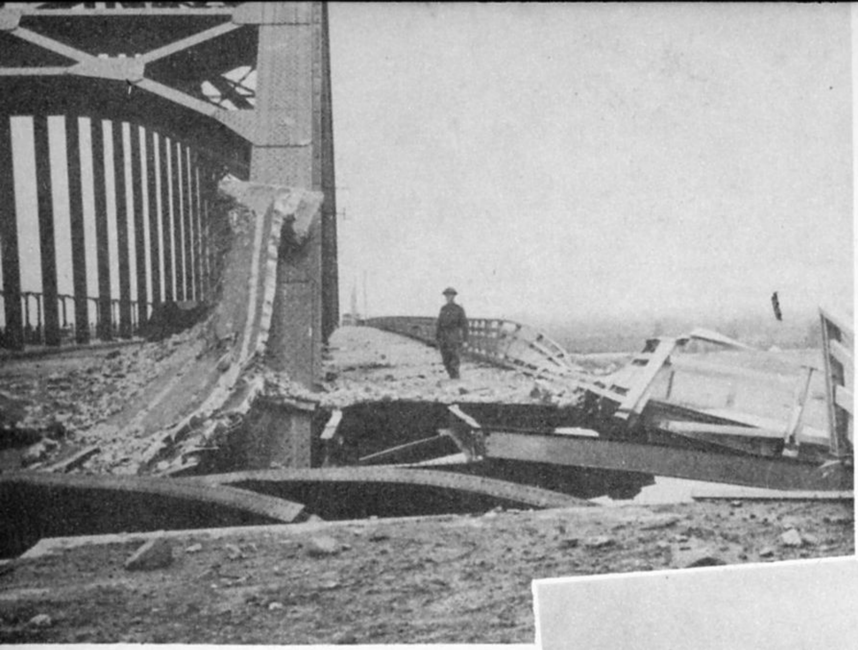
"A single isolated battle that ranks in magnificance and courage with Guam, Tarawa, Omaha Beach. A story that should be told to the blowing of bugles and the beating of drums for the men whose bravery made the capture of this crossing over the Waal (L. Rhine) Possible."

BILL DOWNS
War Correspondent C. B. S.



MORTAR SQUADS—
From the cemetery high above the town our mortars dropped destruction into the German held city below.

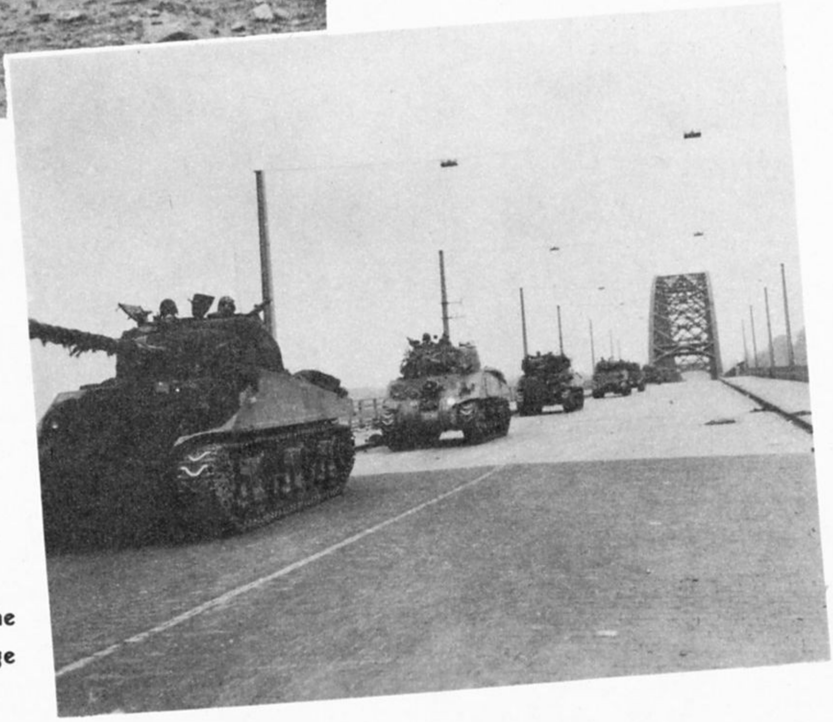




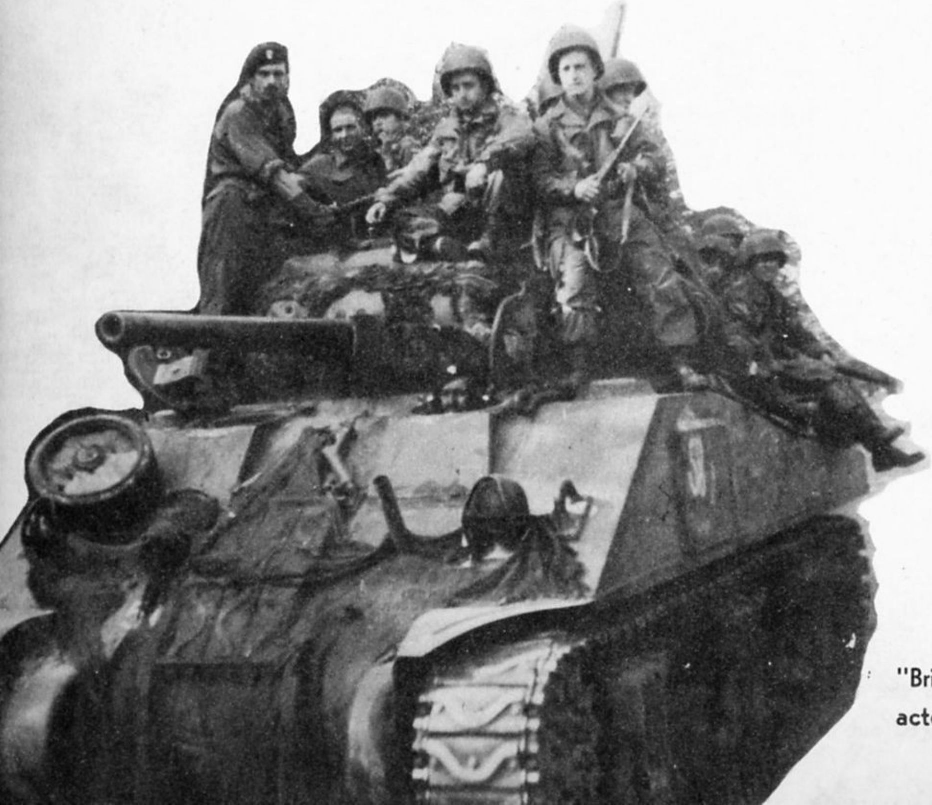
Nijmegen

BATTLE FOR THE WAAL BRIDGE

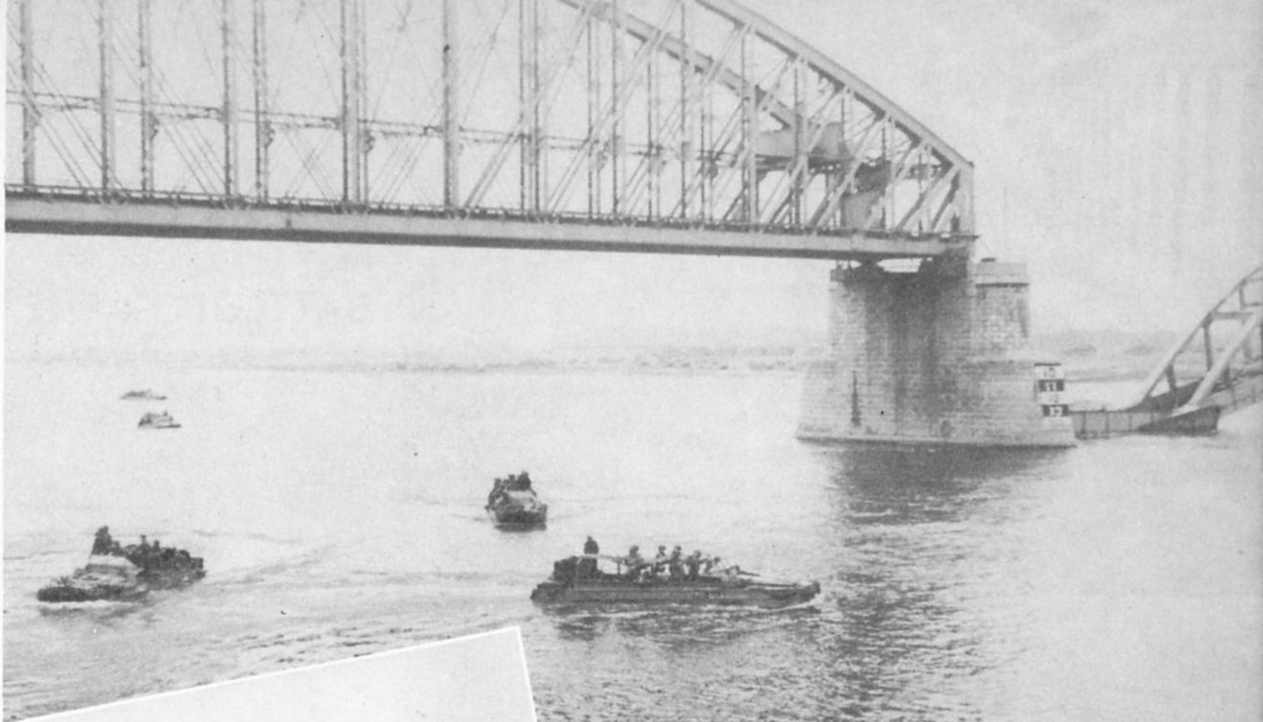
Artillery and bombing did some damage after we had taken the bridge, but it was quickly repaired.



80 Germans were killed in the super-structure of the huge bridge —largest single span in Europe.

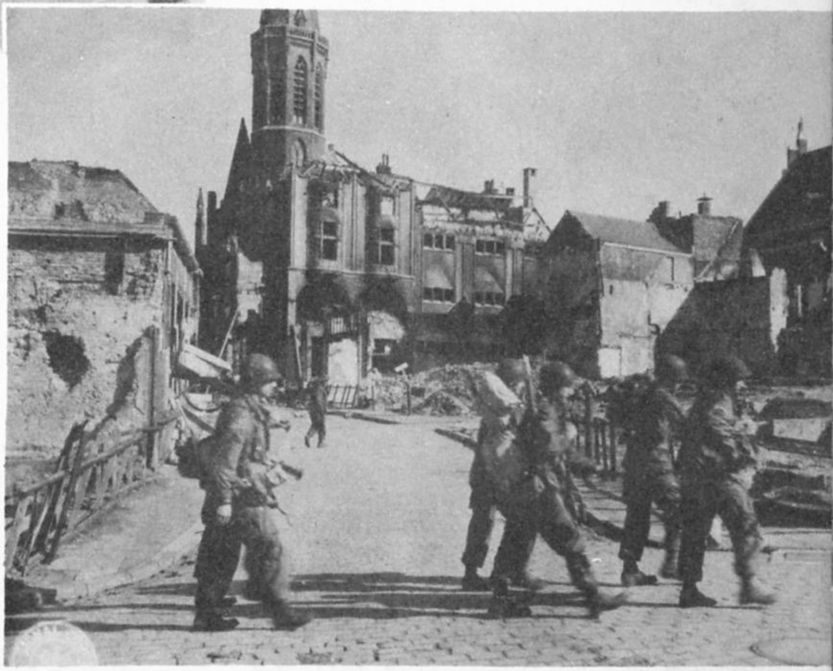


"British armor protected troopers in street fighting, acted as artillery when the crossing was made."
—Downs.

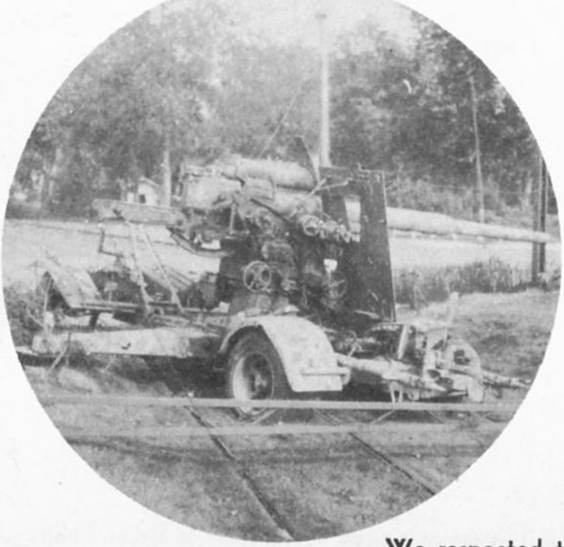


British Buffalos manuver under the fallen R. R. Bridge after the Rhine (Waal) is ours. The original crossing was not so tranquil—

"Twenty-six assault boats were in the water. Two hundred sixty men would make the first assault. Waiting for them on the other bank were 400 to 600 Germans . . . the shelling continued. A smoke screen was laid, but it wasn't very effective because of the wind. . . . Men slumped in their seats . . . of those 260 men, half were wounded or killed . . . only 13 of 26 boats came back. . . . Others didn't wait for boats. Some stripped off equipment, took a bandolier of ammunition and swam the river, rifles on their backs. There was bitter bayonet fighting and Americans died, but more Germans died." —Downs.



A patrol passes through the ruins of Nijmegen (508).



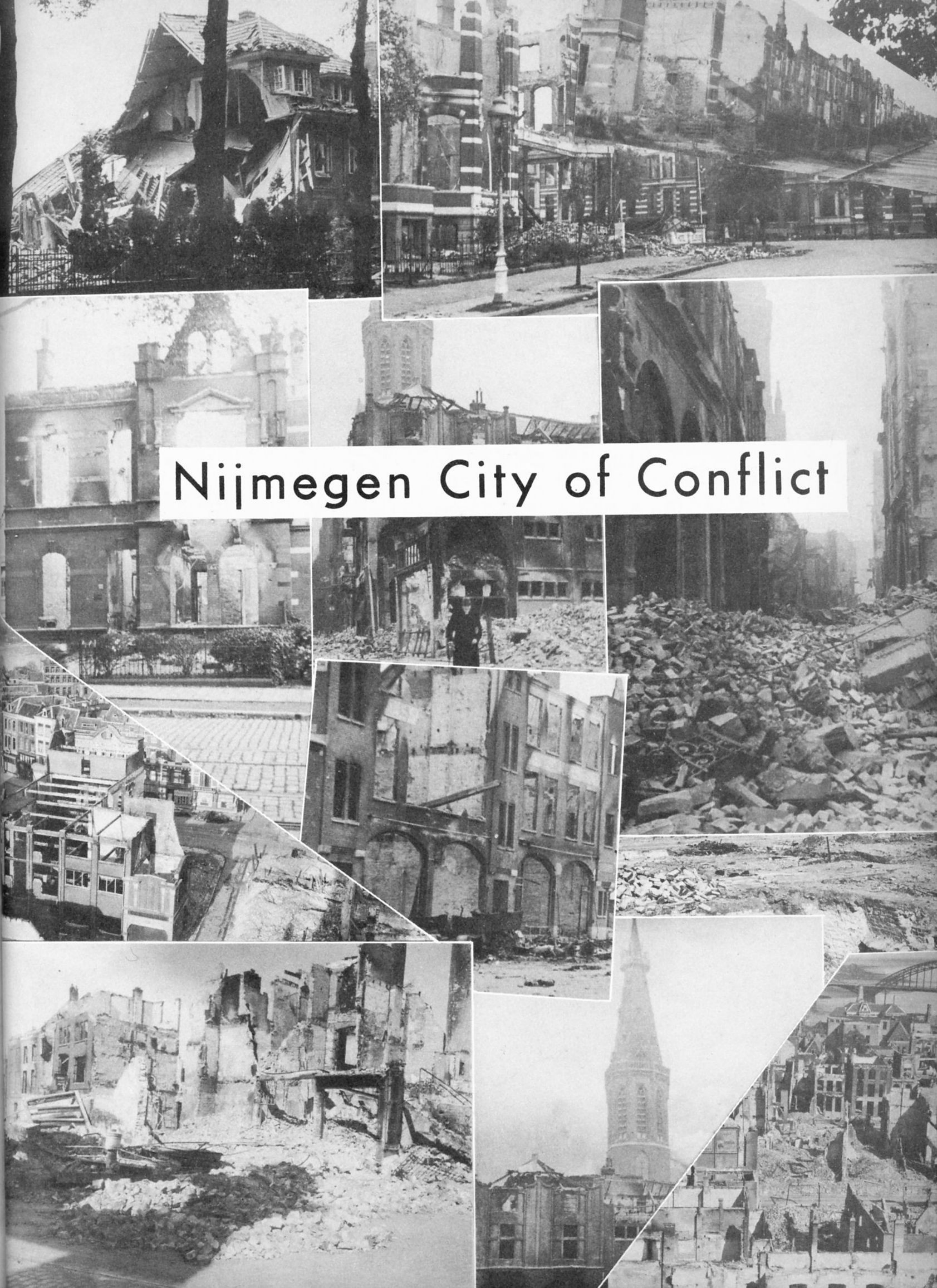
We respected the German "88". This one was knocked out in the Roundabout near the bridge.

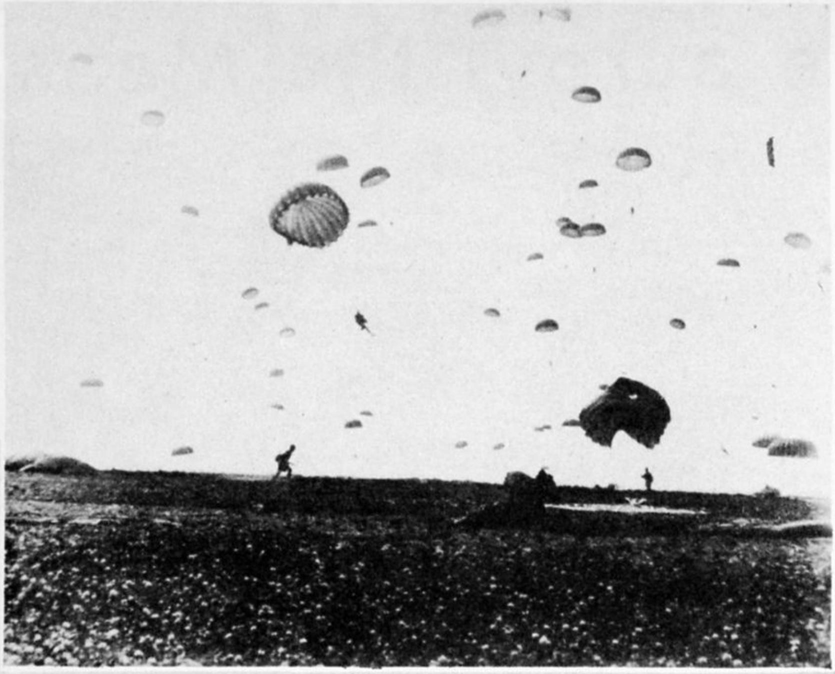
Brig. Gen. Francis A. March. "Andy" March ran the fire direction center and commanded British and American Artillery in the critical allround defense of the Nijmegen area. With the 82nd from Africa to the Elbe, General March is the dean of Airborne Artillerymen.

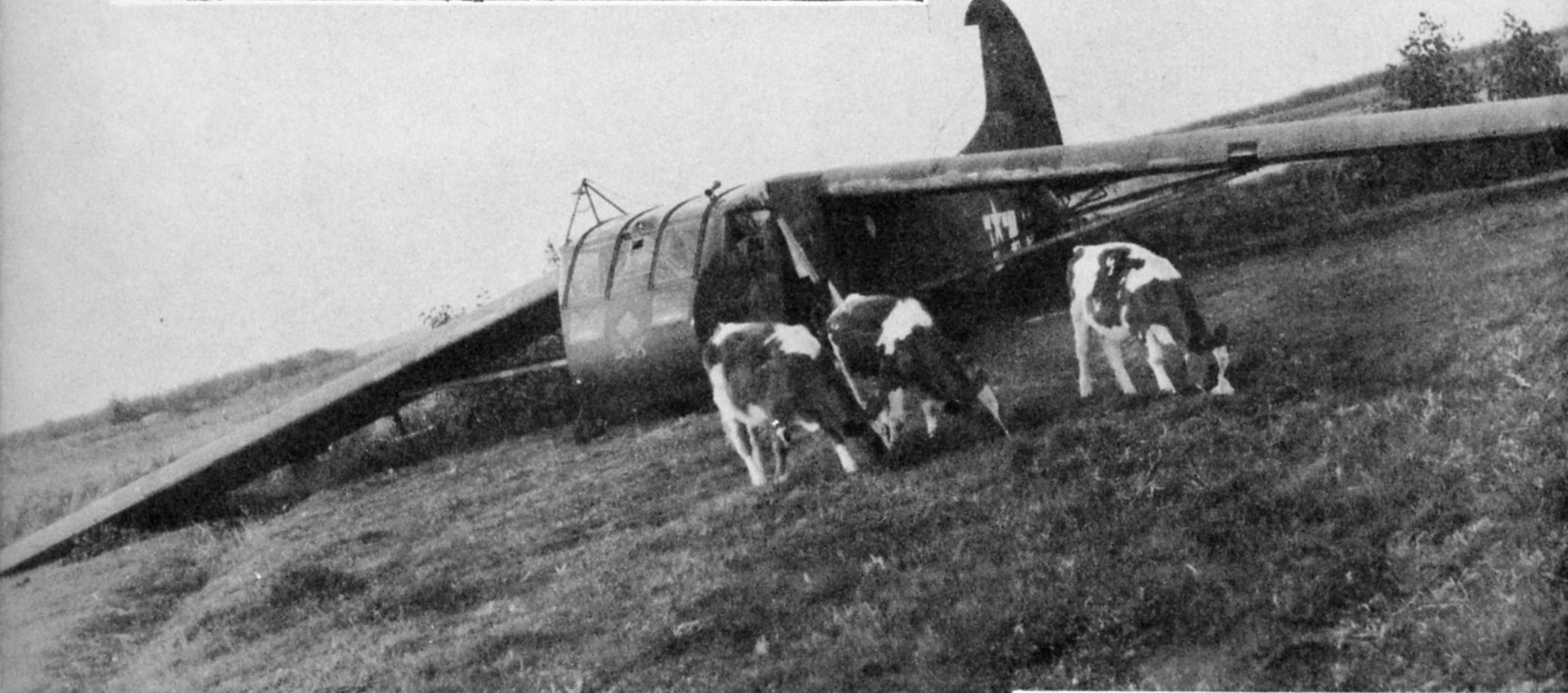
Pack and Parachute "Seventy-Fives" did the job in Holland.

82nd Field Artillery

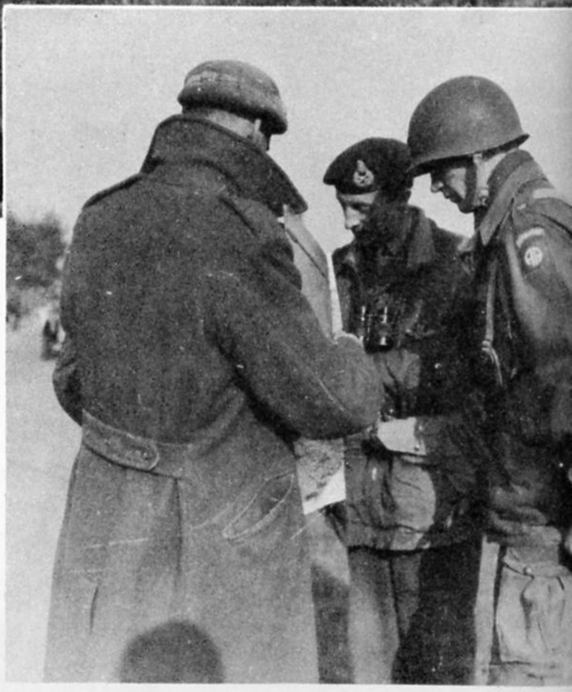
Nijmegen City of Conflict





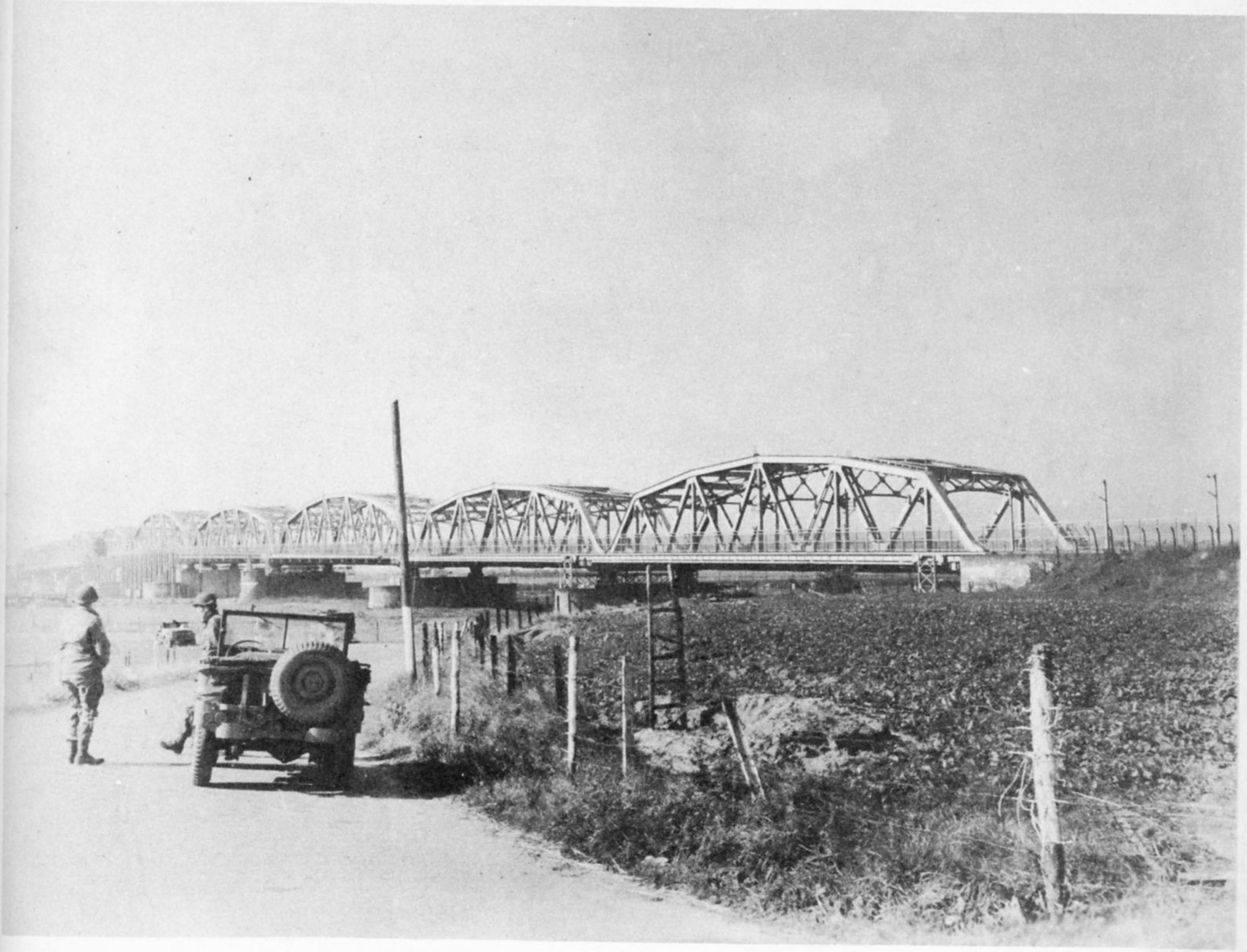


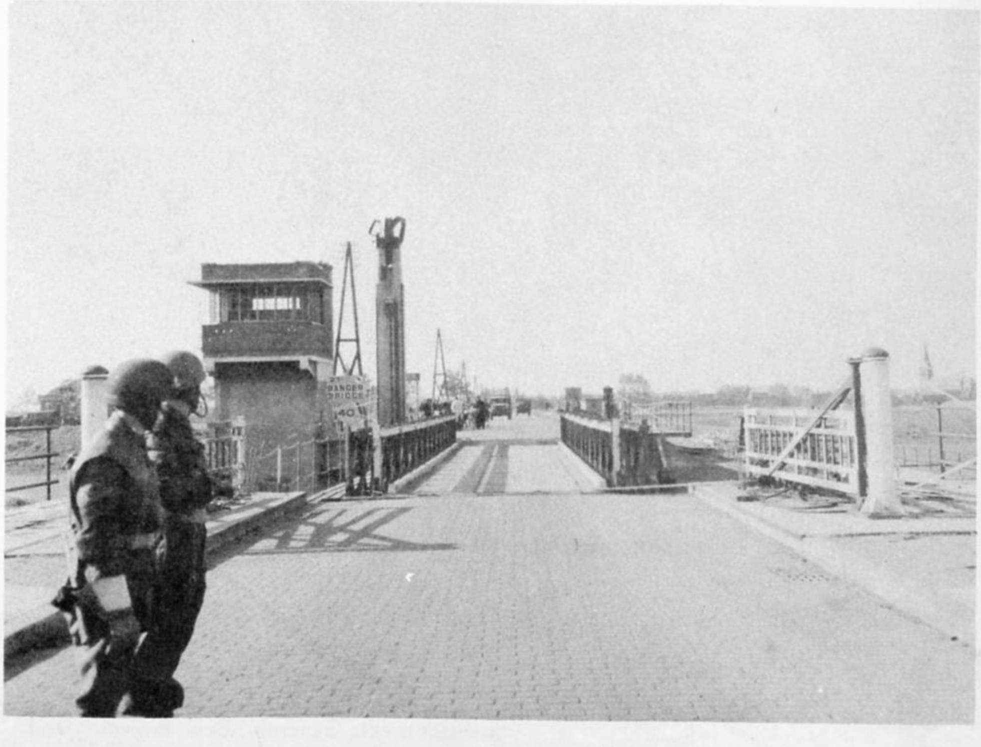
The Drop Zone near Grave — First Parachutes and then Gliders landed here in anticipation of the assault on the Grave Bridge—native livestock was unconcerned.



The first union of U. S. Airborne and British Ground troops in Holland was in a sugar beet patch near Grave. British Tank Commander meets Generals "Ben" Browning and "Slim Jim" Gavin.

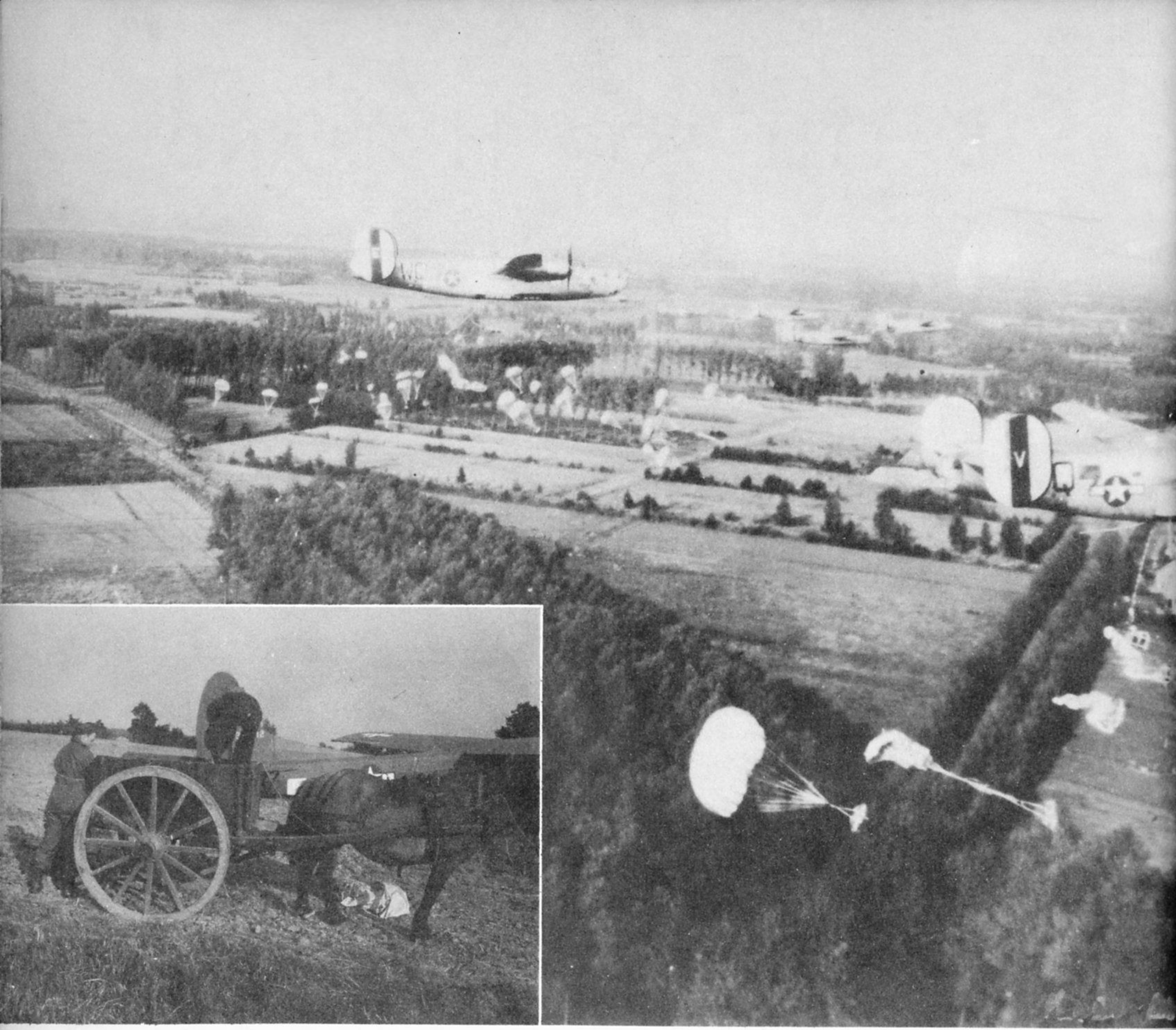
Grave Bridge across the Maas





The Huge Grave Bridge across the Maas in Holland was taken by the 504 Combat Team of the Eighty-second on D-Day. The first of three major spans to be captured and held by the 82nd, the Grave bridge was reached by the British on D+3. The ancient fortress town of Grave was the first town in Holland liberated by the Allies.

Between Grave and Nijmegen runs the Maas-Waal Canal. This key bridge was taken intact by the 82nd's 504 Prcht. Inf. and the 307th Engineers.



Resupply by air is vital when cut off from friendly ground troops.

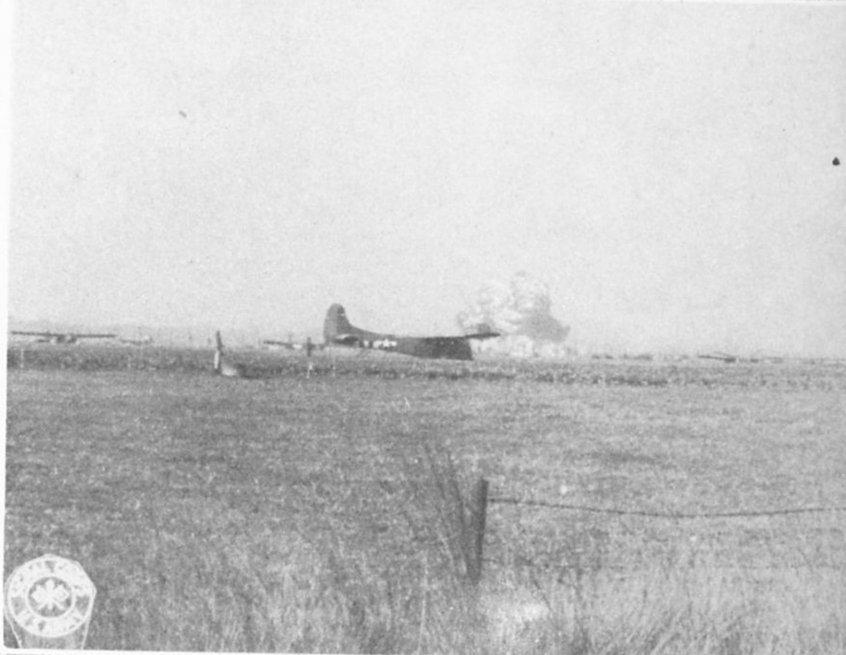
The 88—Most respected German weapon.

Yanks and Tommies—It was a combined operation.

BATTLE FOR HOLLAND

The Luftwaff came over regularly but some German planes never returned.

Flack from antiaircraft got some of our boys too.



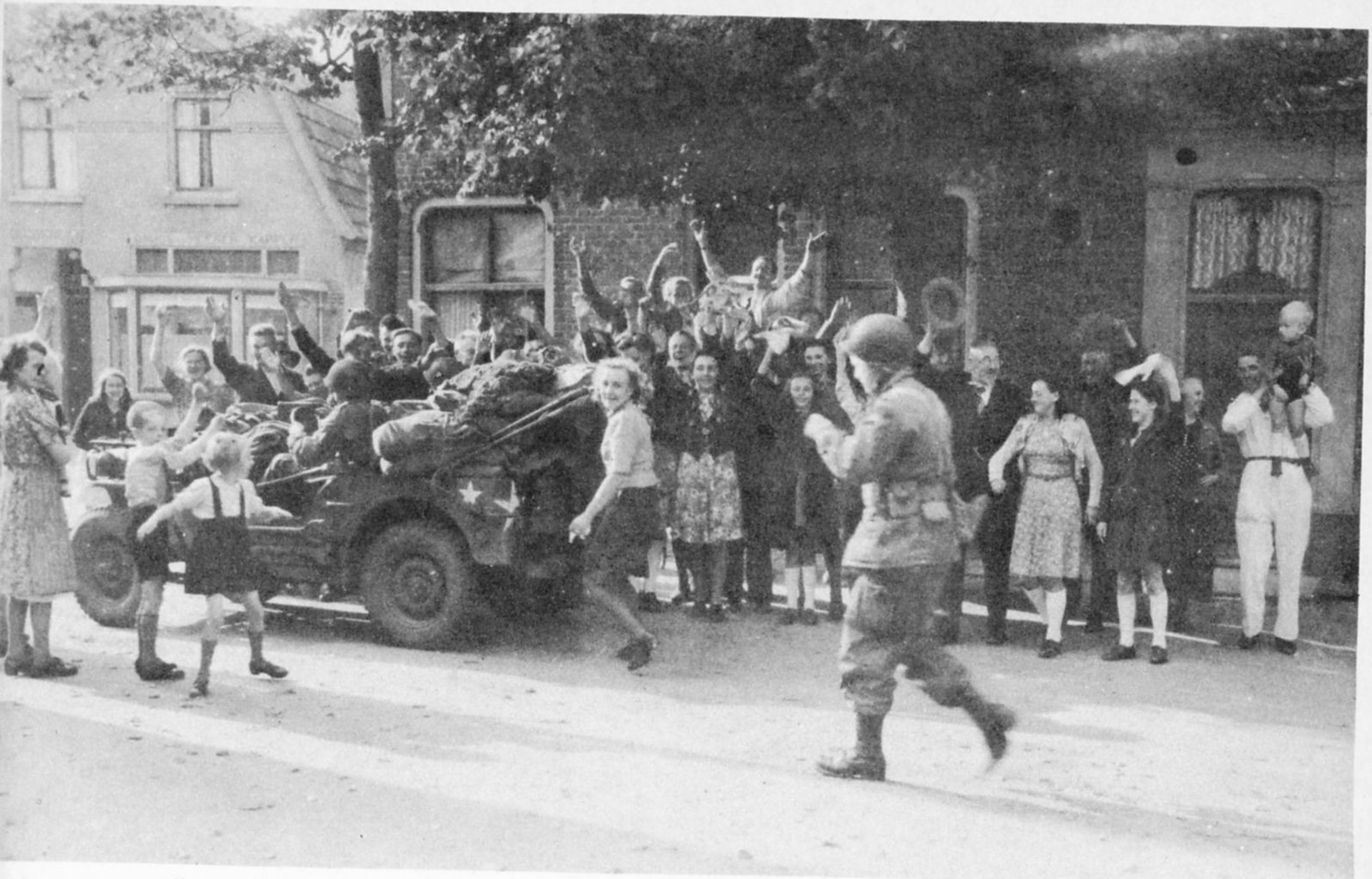
Reconnaissance jeeps patrolled well in Germany while the situation was still fluid.

The British crossed in Buffalos when the bridges were under repair.

Dutch children ran out of their houses to see a sky full of planes, parachutes and gliders — minutes later fully armed troopers were on the march.

The high ground from Groesbeek to Bergendahl was a hard won objective. Knocked out German tank (right) was near the German border in the Battle of Bergendahl.

British flail tanks explode land mines in heavily mined area north of Nijmegen.

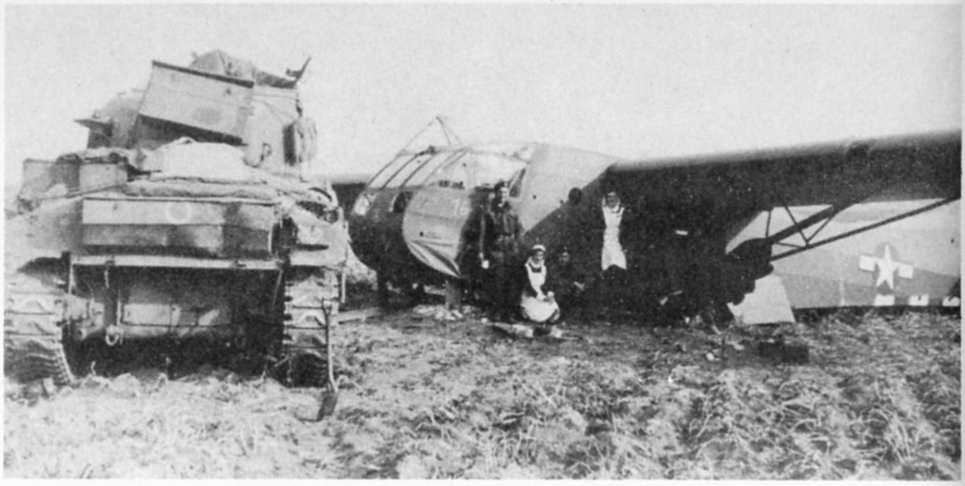


Troops of the 505 Combat Team 82nd Airborne Division enter Groesbeek 1 hour after landing.

Key to holding Airborne gains in Holland was the wooded high ground across from the German Riechwald.

A teller mine got this medium tank.

A Dutch nurse volunteered her services complete with homemade stretcher.



An abandoned glider becomes a Limey aid station.

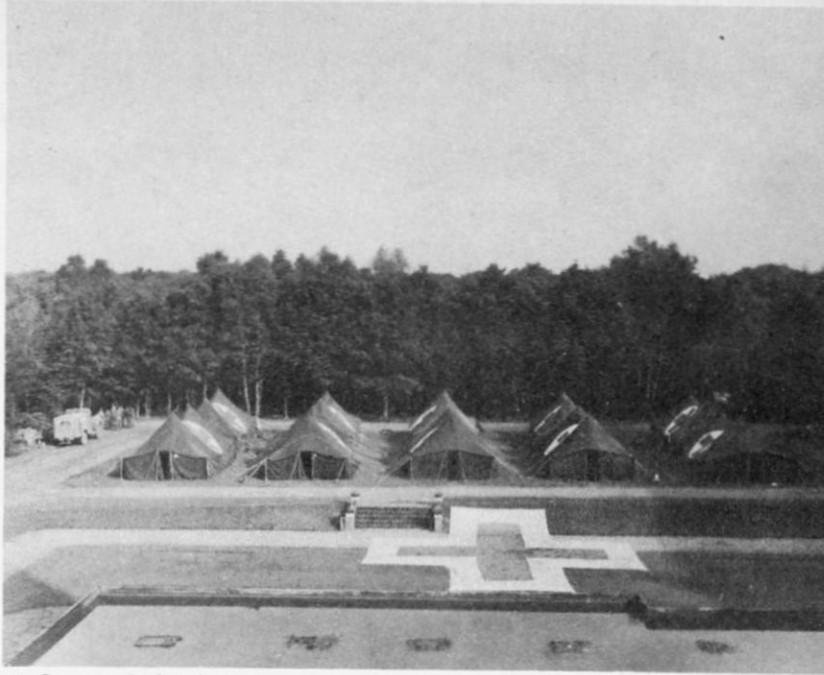
Jeep ambulances carry the wounded out of Nijmegen.

Col. Lindstrom treats a wounded German.

The Medics

First Aid in Holland

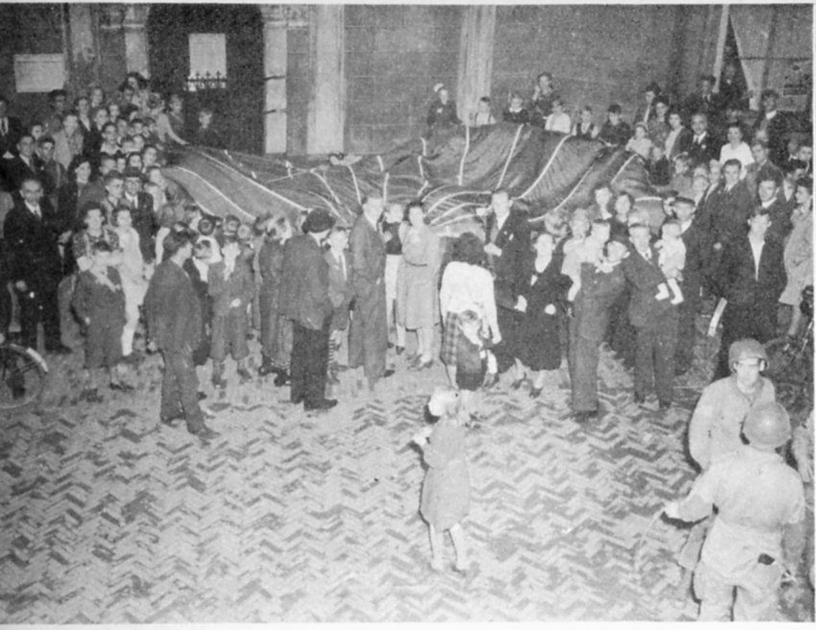
Civilian evacuation in Nijmegen.



A German baby factory was converted into the Division hospital—Tents were added to take care of less serious casualties.

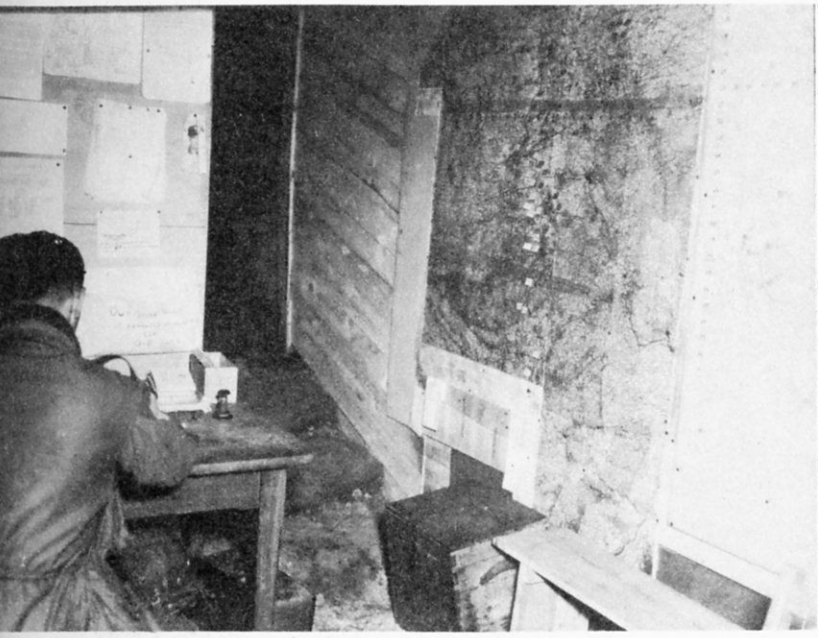
Left and above—Glider crash casualties are treated on the landing zone.

Wounded German Prisoners receive medical aid.

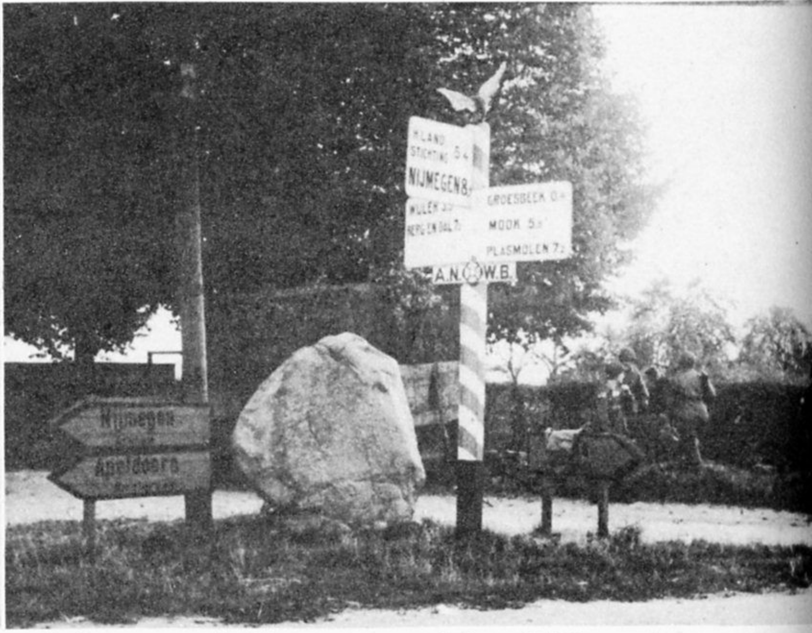


Grave—1st town liberated in Holland—celebrates with a bright blue equipment chute H-Hour plus.

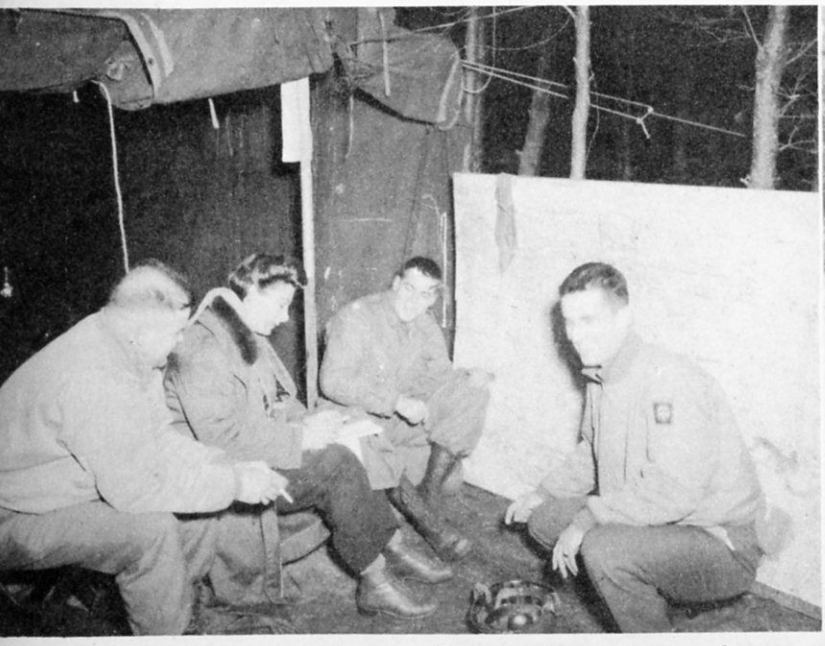
" Naar Groesbeek"—The road between Groesbeek and Nijmegen. At either end was furious fighting.



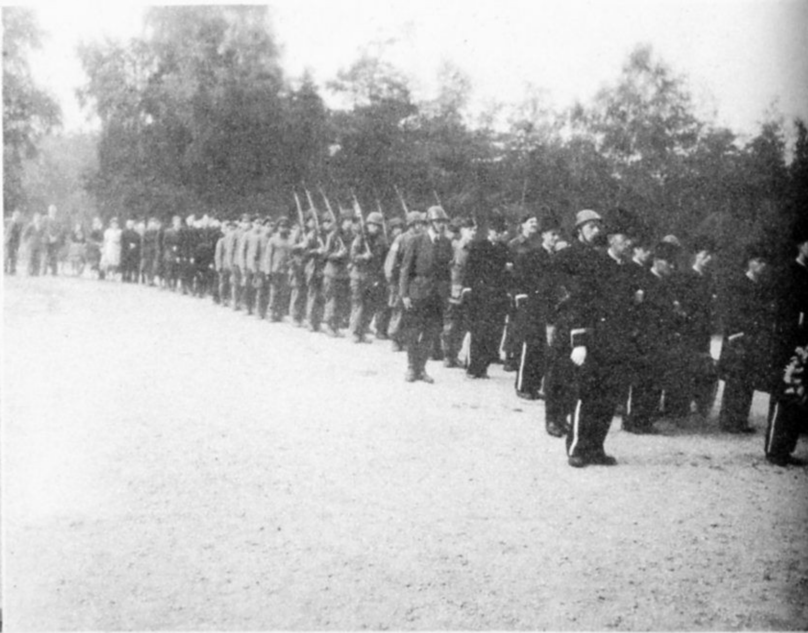
As the battle dragged into weeks, Headquarters in decker's woods went underground.



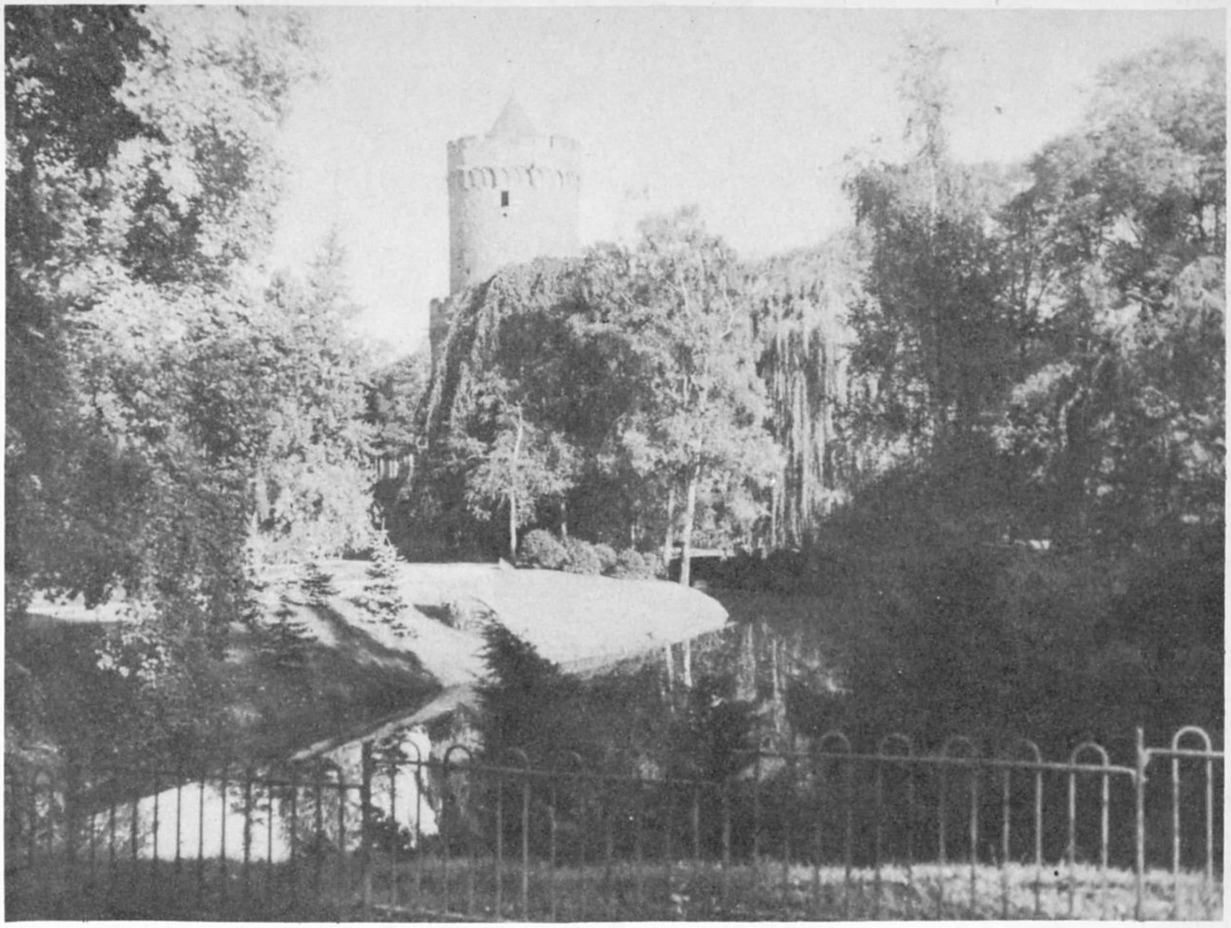
Each town, each kilometer meant furious fighting and American dead.



I. N. S. War Correspondent Lee Carson gets the situation from the Division Staff.



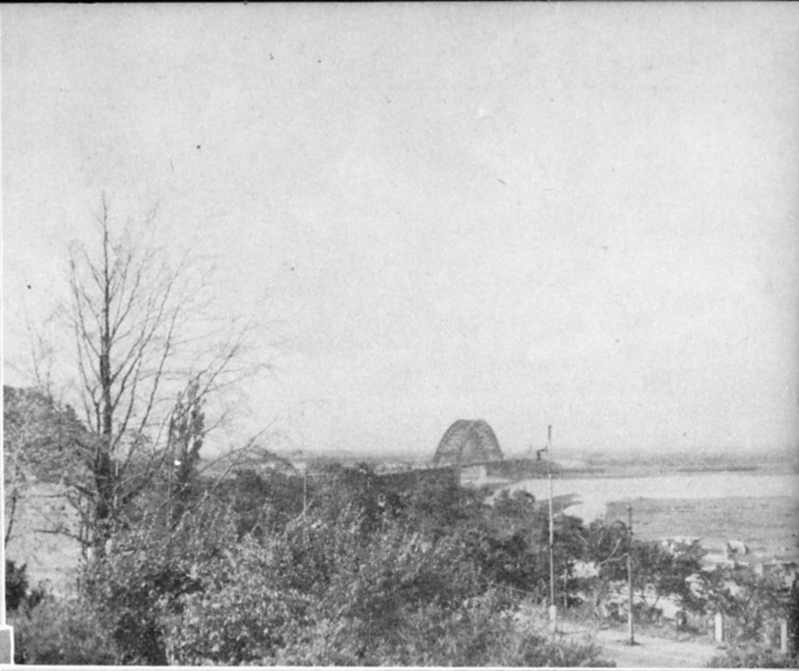
Funeral for the Dutch patriot who gave his life playing major role in saving the Nijmegen bridge.

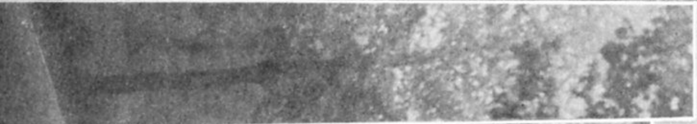


This ancient fort once stood sentinel on the Waal. Now it is part of a beautiful Nijmegen city park.

German graves in a Gelderland cemetery.

Dutch civilians still look after the American graves as they did here in the early days of the battle.





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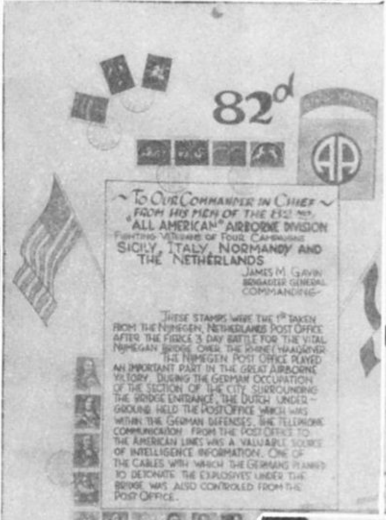
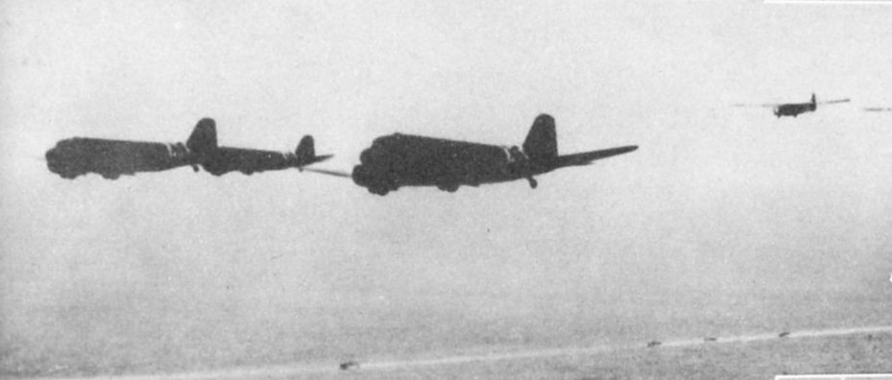


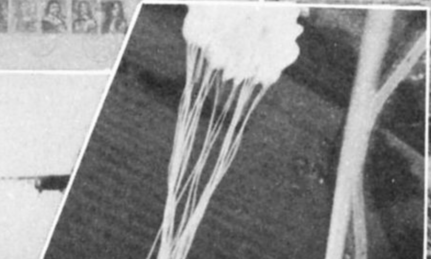
82d

~ To Our Commander in Chief ~
From his men of the 82nd
"All American" Airborne Division
Fighting Veterans of Four Campaigns
Sicily, Italy, Normandy and
The Netherlands

James M. Gavin
Brigadier General
Commanding

These stamps were the 1st taken from the Nijmegen, Netherlands Post Office after the fierce 3 day battle for the vital Nijmegan bridge over the Rhine (Waal) river. The Nijmegen Post Office played an important part in the great airborne victory. During the German occupation of the section of the city surrounding the bridge entrance, the Dutch underground held the Post Office which was within the German defenses. The telephone communication from the Post Office to the American lines was a valuable source of intelligence information. One of the cables with which the Germans planned to detonate the explosives under the bridge was also controled from the Post Office.





The Mayor of Nijmegen.

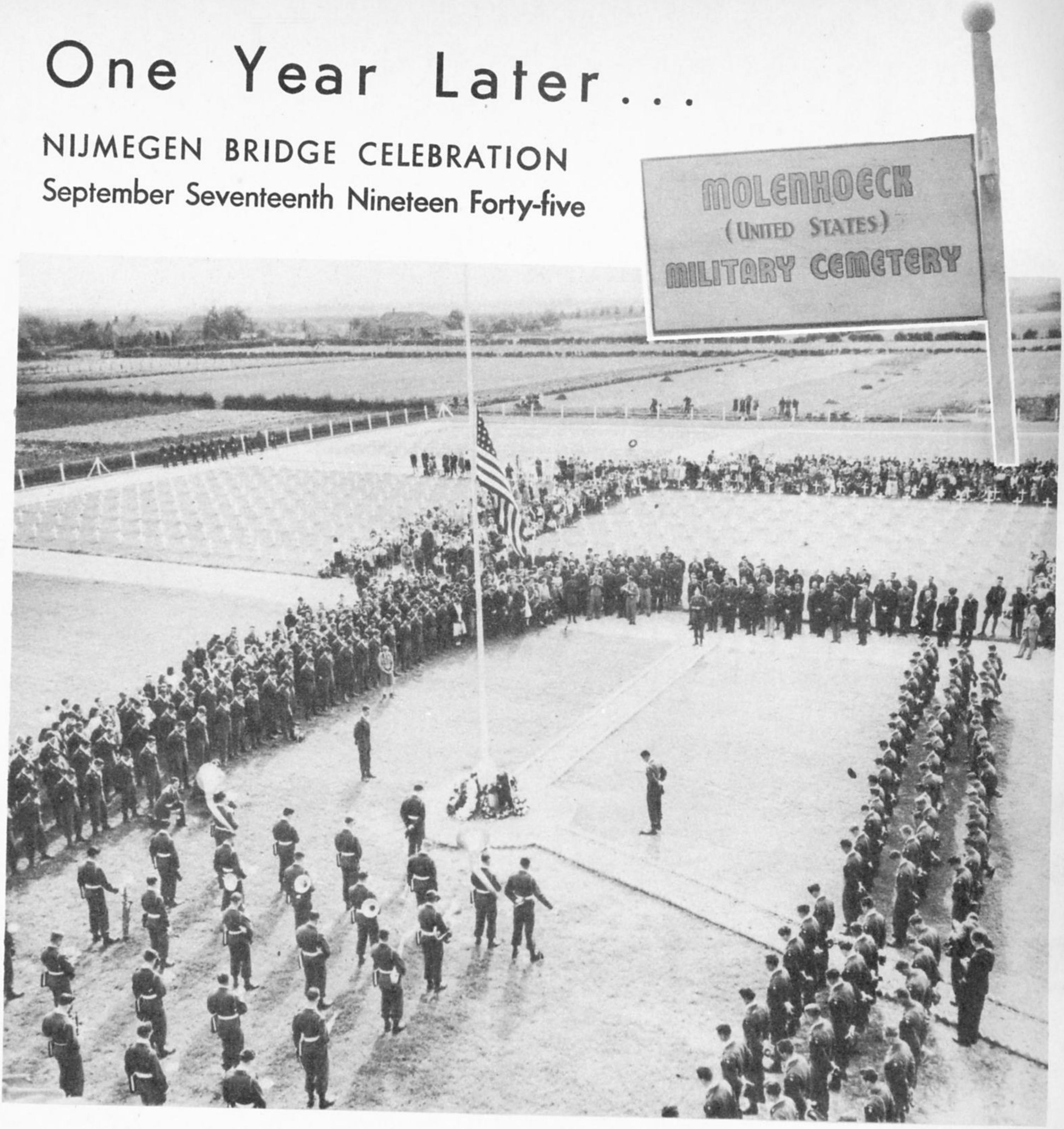
Captain Harry introduces General Gavin.

Marching through Nijmegen. 20,000 Dutchmen turned out to greet us.

One Year Later . . .

NIJMEGEN BRIDGE CELEBRATION

September Seventeenth Nineteen Forty-five

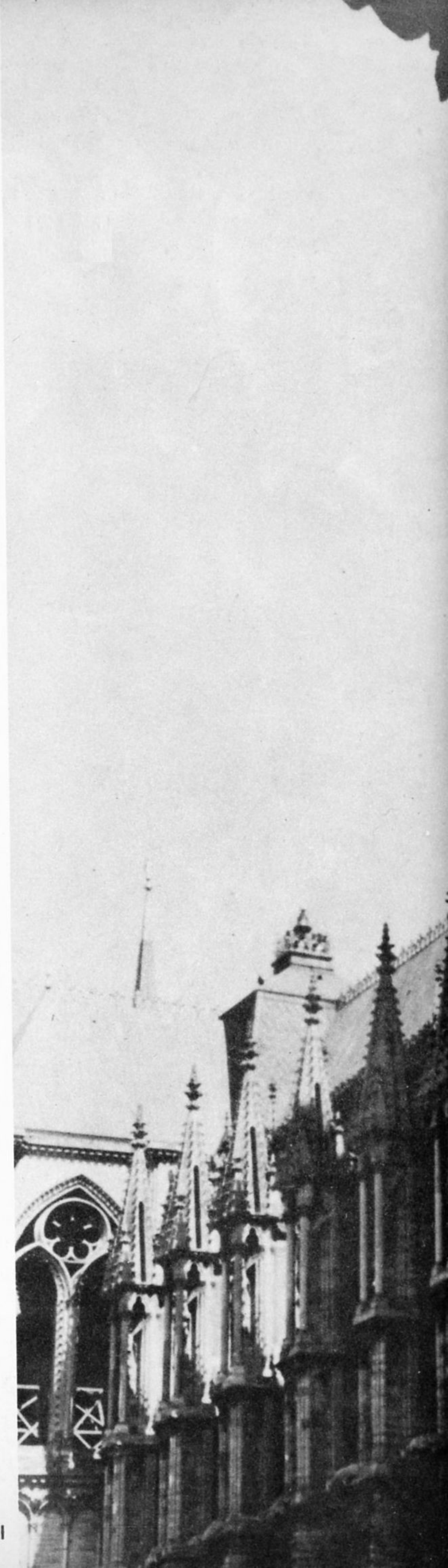

MOLENHOECK
(UNITED STATES)
MILITARY CEMETERY

In Memoriam

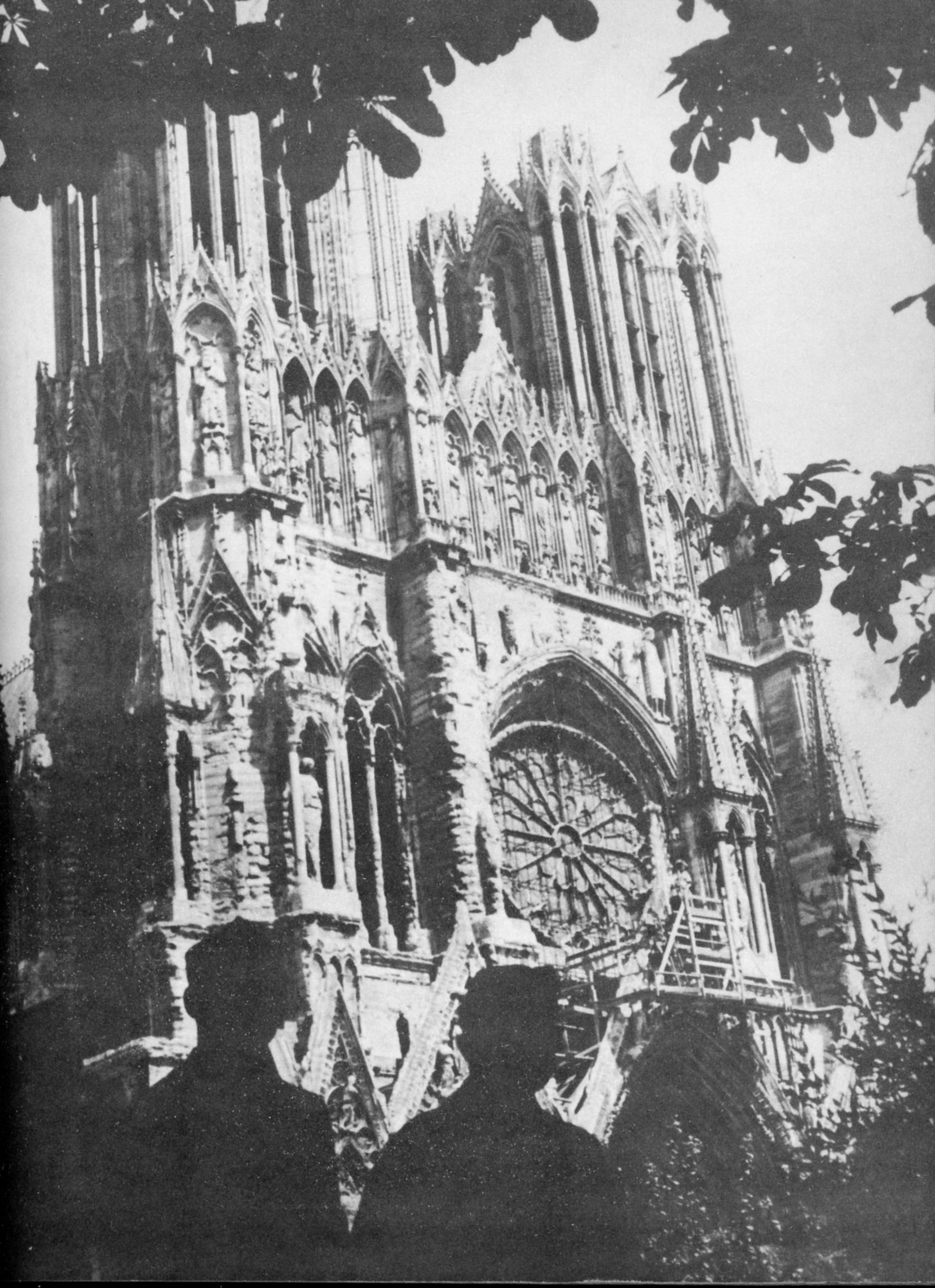
The 82nd Airborne returns to pay homage to the troopers left behind at Molenhoeck Cemetery and share the joy and sacrifice of the people of Nijmegen, Groesbeck, Grave and Bergendahl on the anniversary of their liberation.

FRANCE

THE 82ND Airborne Division visited France five times. In June, 1944, the 82nd soldiers staged a wild onslaught against Normandy for their first entry. Next, after Holland, the sky-commandoes had a welcome rest in the Suippes-Sissonne area near Rheims, but this siesta was rudely ended when the division was summoned post-haste to head off the Germans after their break-through in the Ardennes. When the 82nd's series of victories in the Bulge had become history, the conquering troopers re-entered France to again bivouac at their old camping spot near Rheims. There they trained for the proposed airborne attack on Berlin which was cancelled. But, with Germany's life slowly ebbing, France said good-by to the All Americans again as the veteran campaigners hurried northward, this time to help apply the knock-out blow. The 82nd became indeed rich in battle glory as victory after victory carried them to their final battle north of the river Elbe. The Germany of Hitler died when Gavin's men met the Russians at Grabow. After several weeks at Ludwigslust, the division returned to France for the fourth and final time. There in the warm sun of June the older men of the division left their alma mater for shipment home. Then westward the 82nd travelled along winding, tree-bordered roads to Epinal, near the Swiss border. From Epinal the division moved to Berlin. Upon relief from its occupation duties there the Division once again found itself in the Rheims area awaiting redeployment to U. S. A. Finally the order came for the division to leave France for the last time. It was with mingled memories of comrades dead beside hedgerows, the winter's snow, the summer's sun and the charm of picturesque towns in ancient hills that the men of the 82nd Airborne Division departed Old France.

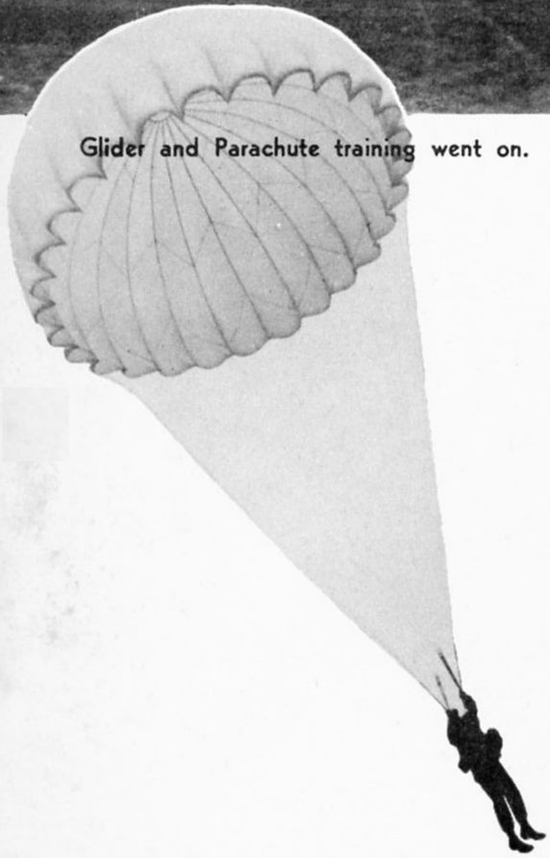


Rheims Cathedral

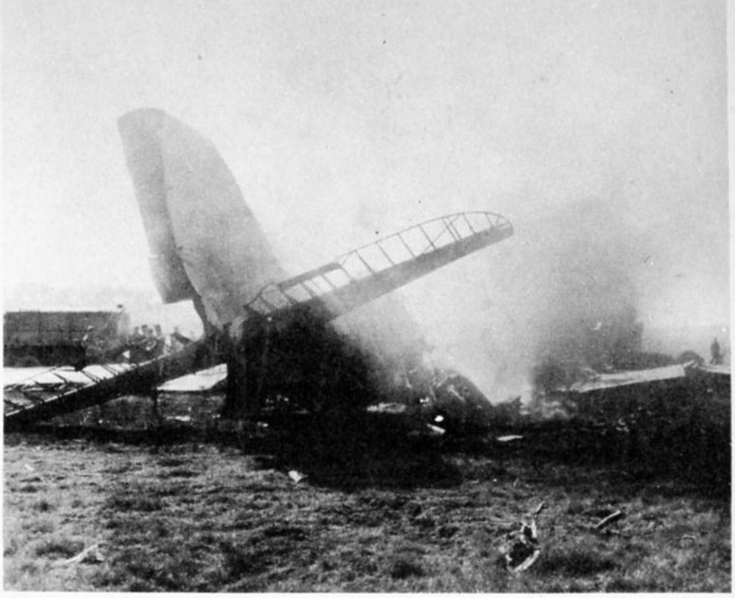


FRANCE

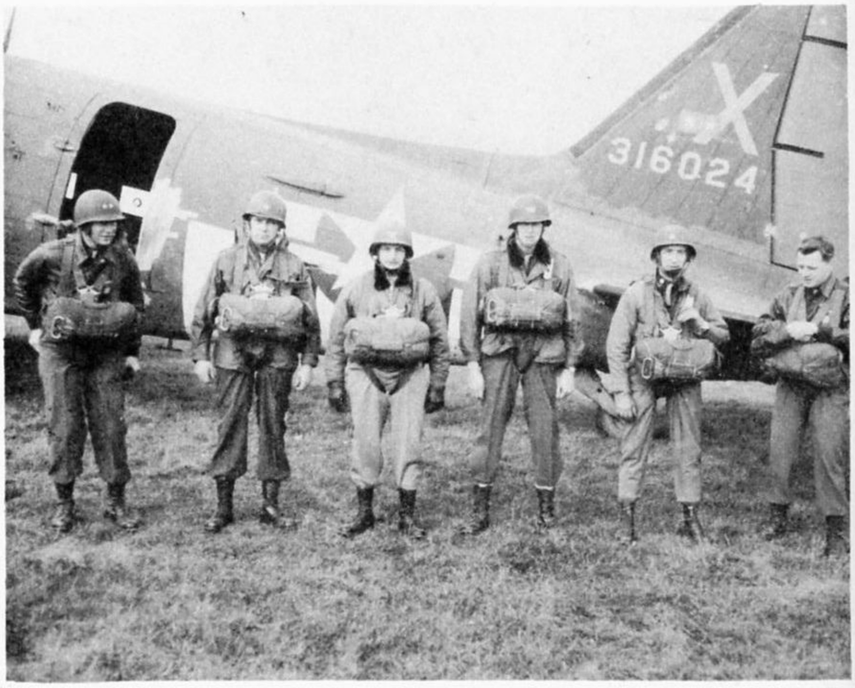
SISSONE



Glider and Parachute training went on.



Tragedy strikes occasionally—even in training.



Here Gen. Gavin and his regimental commanders try out British quick release chute before releasing it for general use.

Gen. Gavin and his aide Capt. Thompson, walk home after an experimental jump. Right: The long anticipated moment.

STAND UP AND HOOK UP

— Gen. Swift Qualifies as a Jumper.

FRANCE

SISSONE

The Hot Stove League. Baseballers, Bucky Walters, Mel Ott, Frankie Frisch, Dutch Leonard, and the 82nd's Slim Jim Gavin.

SPEED LIMIT 40

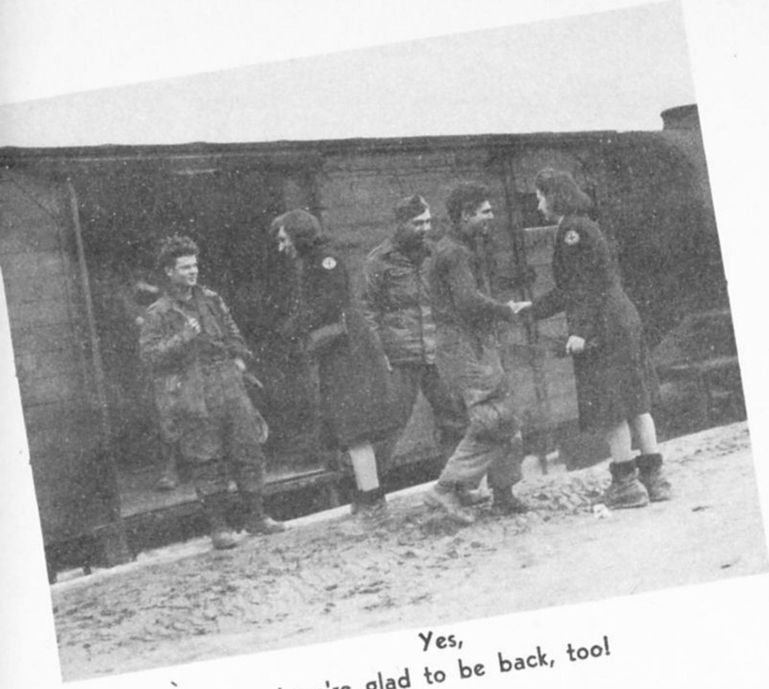
Not a flood — just a busted water main.

That's a joke, son!

OK, So I wanted pie.

Stanbrewer gets jump wings turned down by Army, Navy and Marines, he became first ARC Field Director to qualify as jumper.

First sale in the 82nd's $1,250,000 Bond Drive. First 3 prizes, furloughs to the States.



Yes,
and we're glad to be back, too!

Happy men.

BACK FROM THE BULGE

PARIS

The Germans never conquered Paris. Paris conquered the Germans. There is something about the broad, tree-lined streets that exudes the breath of freedom—a freedom that Napoleon, Bismarck and Hitler couldn't stifle. For Paris, with its strange contrasts of beauty and immorality, somehow draws the visitor to her bosom and makes him feel at home. The rhythm, the pulse of the city, seems attuned to the throb of time which leisurely beats into eternity.

The poets, the musicians and historians are all correct about Paris. The 82nd trooper came, saw, believed—and was surprised. The trees sparkled in the sun. Pretty girls in flowered skirts biked down the Champs. Ancient churches brooded over the brilliant throngs. The wide streets gave one room to breathe. Champagne and cognac bubbled in chronium-and-leather bars. Music was in the ears everywhere. The blood pounded madly. It was great to be alive in Paris!

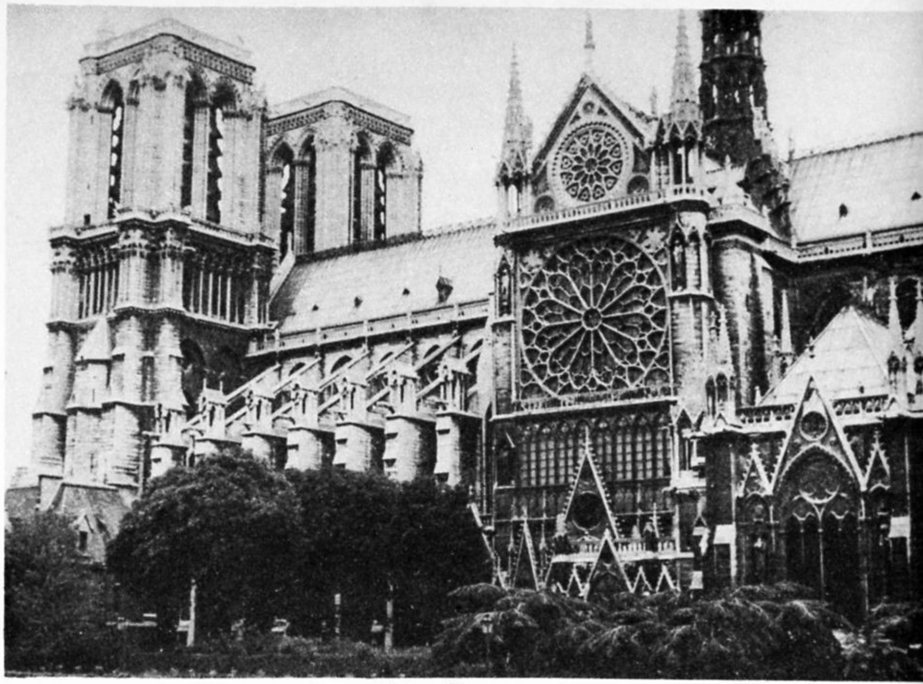
Some of the men spoke rather incoherently after their visits to the French capital. Their enthusiasm for the massive monuments, museums, madamoiselles and churches was remarkable to behold. Here was a whole, magnificent, glorious city unharmed by bombs, holding open her arms for the lucky man on pass. The nostalgia which accompanies memories of home didn't exist in Paris. The departing soldier, looking back on the sunny city, inevitably breathed the fond hope that he be allowed to return some day.

FRANCE

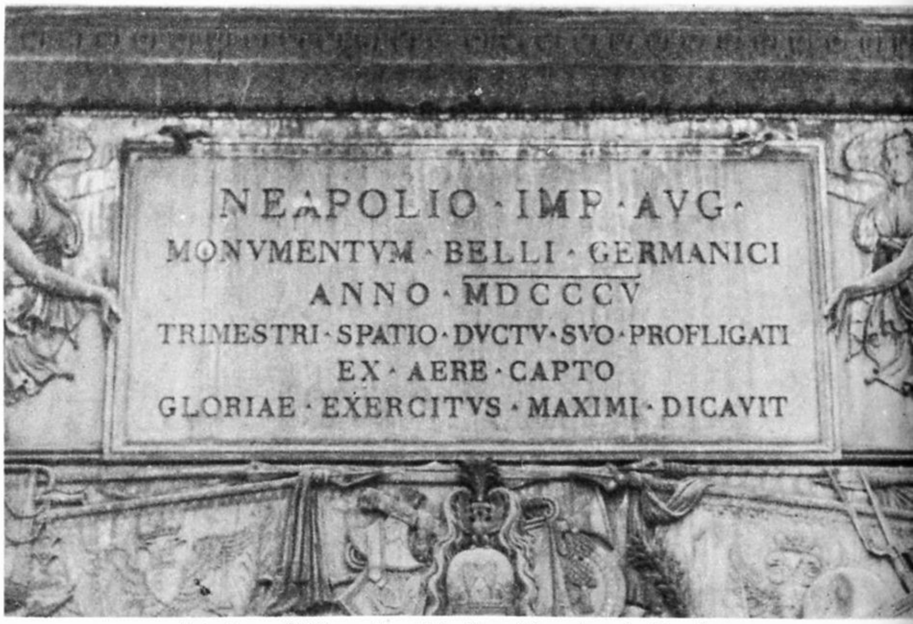
PARIS

La Belle Etoile

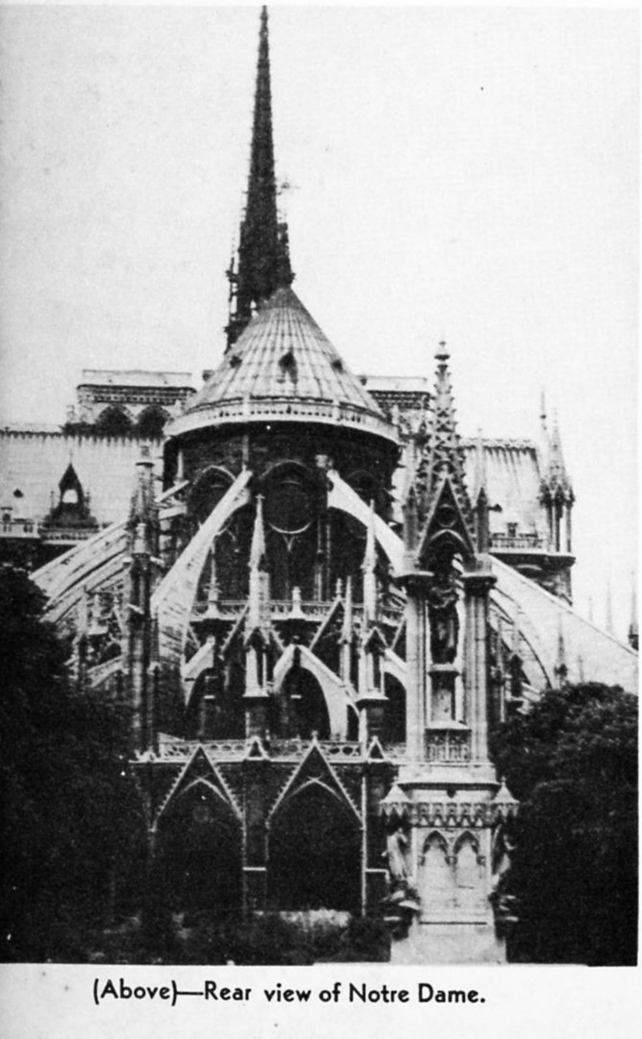
Paris Pick-ups.



Notre Dame.


NEAPOLIO · IMP · AVG ·
MONVMENTVM · BELLI · GERMANICI
ANNO · MDCCCV
TRIMESTRI · SPATIO · DVCTV · SVO · PROFLIGATI
EX · AERE · CAPTO
GLORIAE · EXERCITVS · MAXIMI · DICAVIT

Interior of "Les Invalides" — Napoleon's Tomb



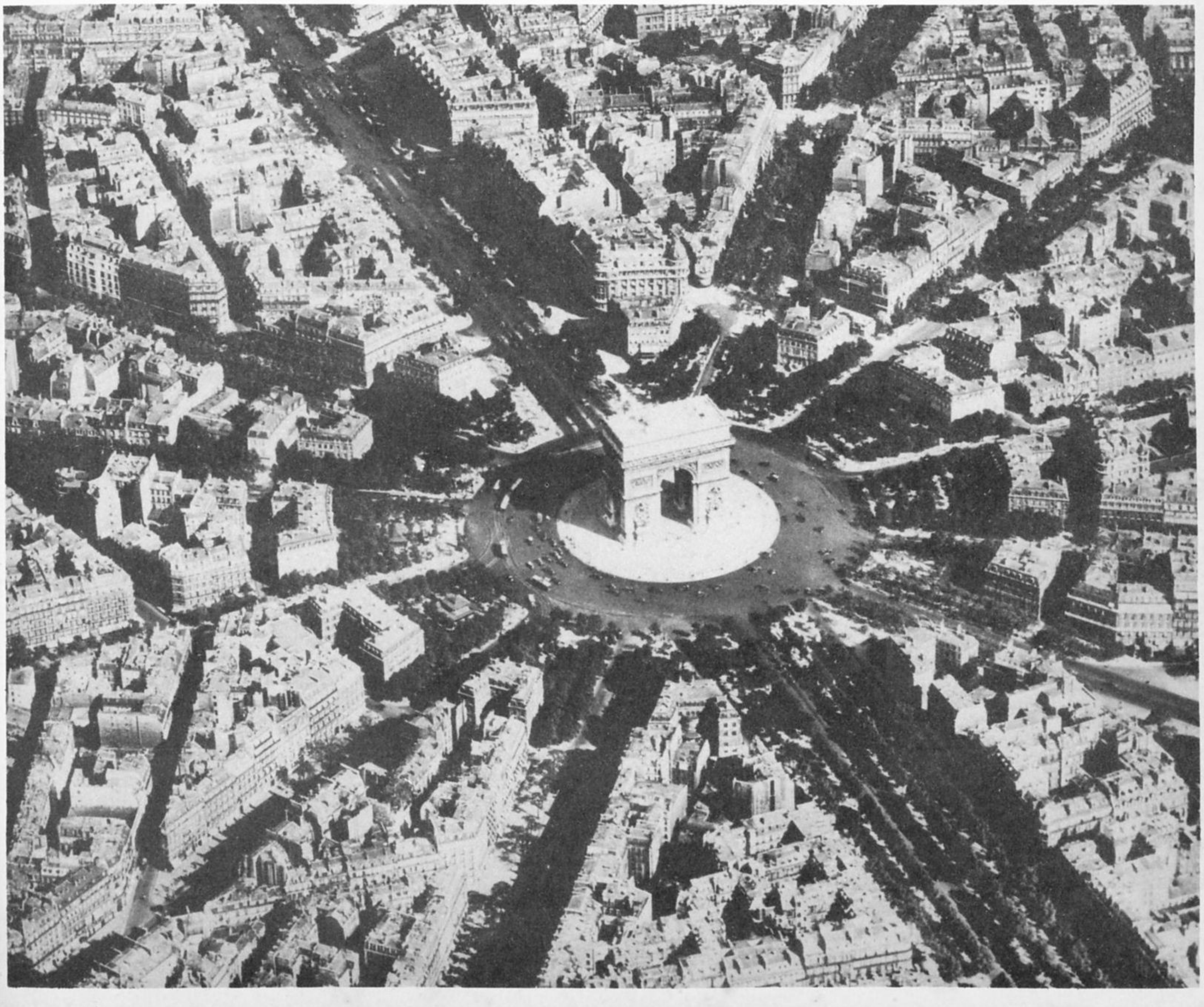
(Above)—Rear view of Notre Dame.

(Right)—Tomb of the Unknown soldier.

ARC De Triomphe.

Toutes Suite, Cheri.

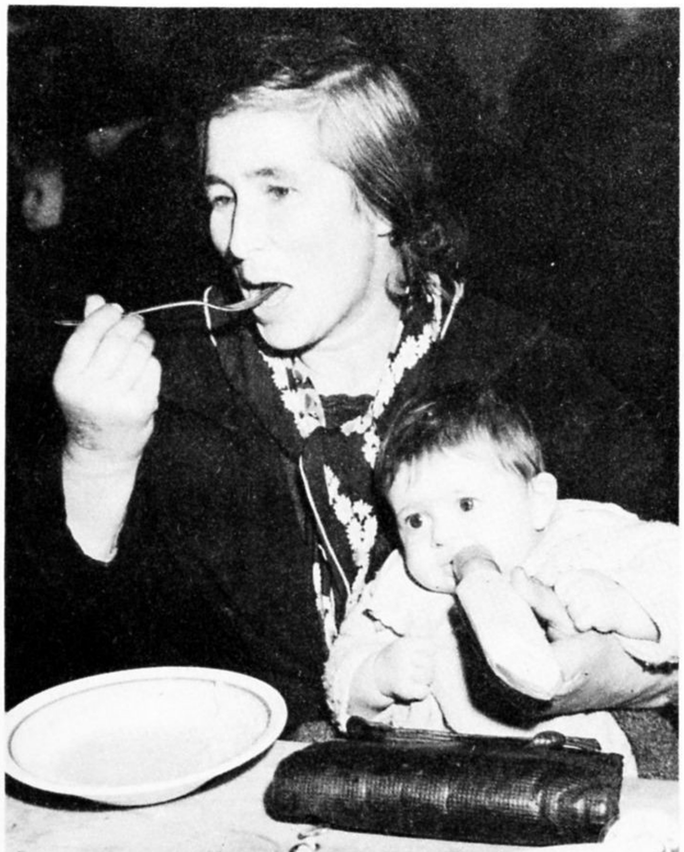
(Below)—Champs De Elysses from the air.



FRANCE . . . AND HER PEOPLE

Thankful . . .

Gay . . .


Hungry . . .

. . . Homeless

Ravished . . .

Helpful . . .

HOPEFUL

FRANCE

RIVIERA

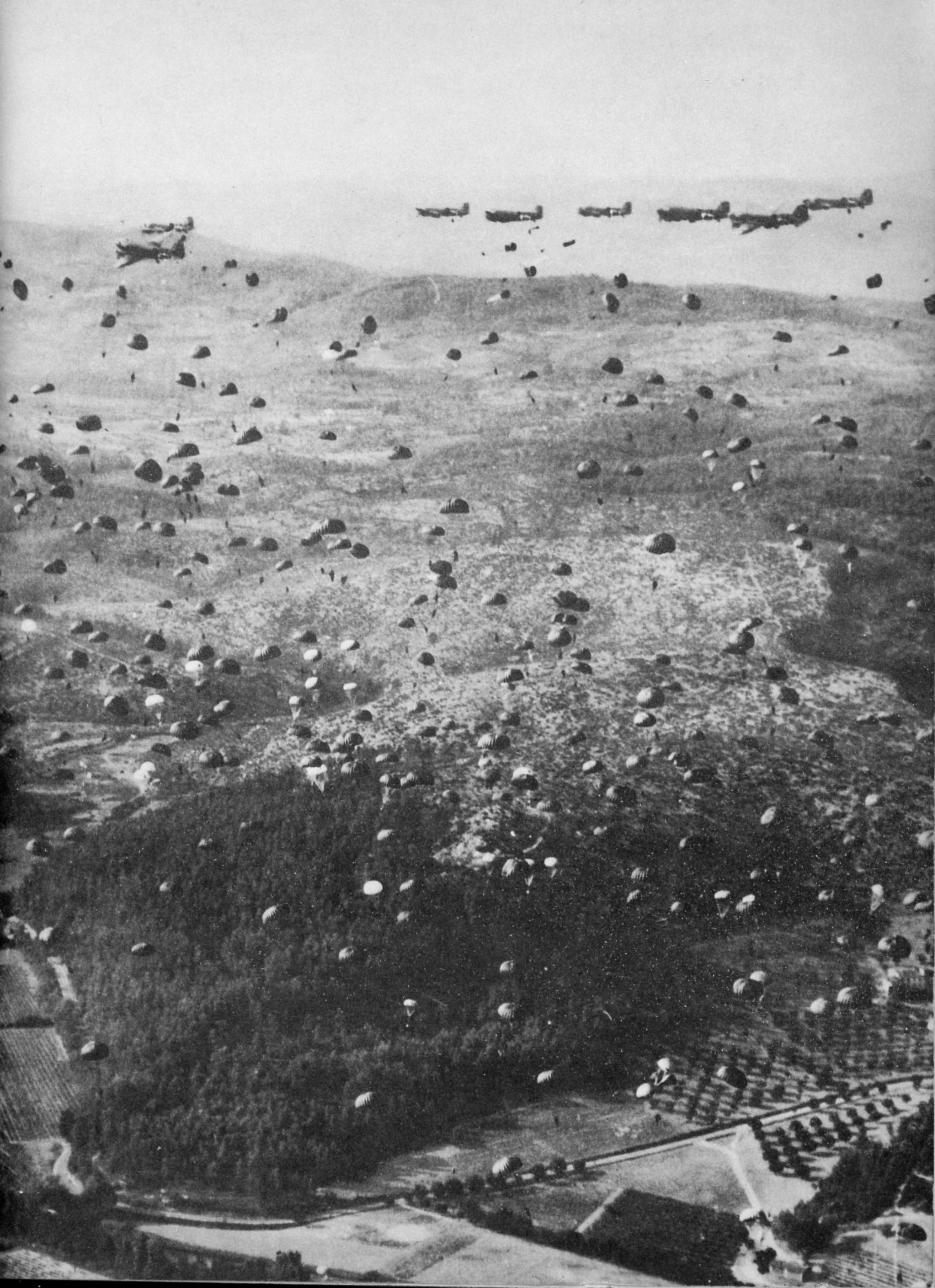
WHILE the 82nd was preparing for Holland an Airborne Task force under General Fredericks jumped and glided into Southern France with the 7th Army in the so-called "Champaign Campaign." Here they liberated among other things, the world famous French Riviera. After the operation was completed the Airborne Task force was deactivated. Most of the men and units (509,517,551,550 special service forces and various artillery battalions) have been assigned, attached or absorbed by the Eighty-second. We proudly present pictures of their invasion.

* * *

After the fighting had ceased in Southern France, the United States Army opened its Riviera Rest and Recreation center. The world's most famous playground was in full swing again. American G. I.'s forgot rank and forgot war, as informality prevailed. Uncle Sam and the French Government through reverse lend lease turned over to our G. I's. the finest suites at the Negresco, Niramco, Carolton, and Martinez, world renowned resort hotels in Nice and Cannes. Where royalty and banded gentry once reigned the American soldier enjoyed 7 days of intrigue with sun and sand.

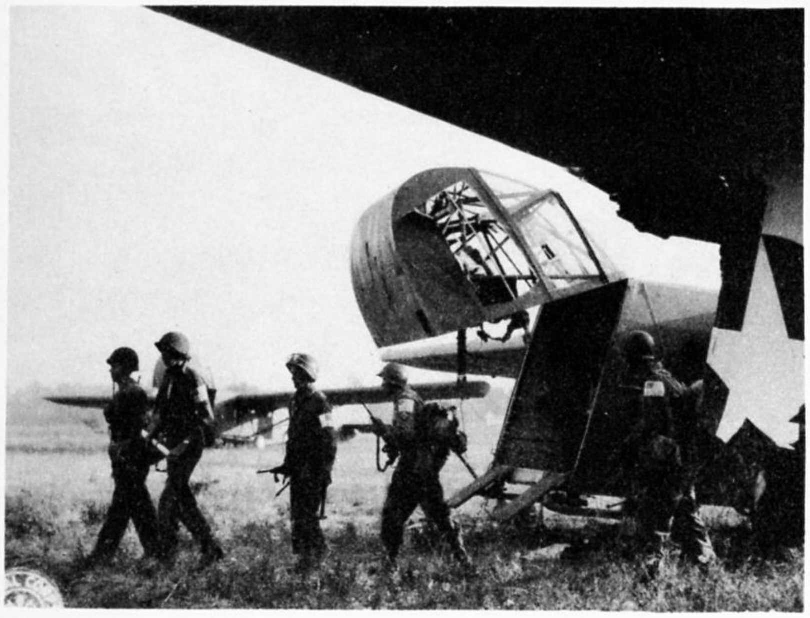
The Mediteranean is a beautiful blue, in dark hues, shading to Royal. The beach at Cannes, a typical Riviera resort town at the Riviera Recreation center is white sand sloping gently into the cooling freshness of the sea. Just behind the beach and elevated above the storm wall is the Riviera equivalent of a boardwalk, a wide gravel promenade dotted flagrantly with palms. Then the white curb and the contrasting smooth Macadam Parkway that warms the bottoms of your barefeet as you leisurely cross to one of the huge resort hotels, long the abode for International royalty and splendor. Street cafes, outdoor gardens looking out over the sea, orchestras from Rumba Bands and swing for afternoon tea dances, balconies, umbrellas, cool drinks, deep tan, refreshing swim; these are the immediate joys in an afternoon on the beach. Informality plus a beach shirt open at the neck, a pair of bathing trunks. That's all. Then you go out for a ride in a Pedalo, a kyack or a canoe. Sometimes a sail. The weather is always perfect, the sky is a cloudless blue with streaks of white occasionally breaking the monotony and reminding us that it does rain over those mountains some place. Those mountains are rocky desert beauty, the primitive eroded landscape of brilliant colors and arid contrast to the flagrant tropical growth along the sea. They circle the beach and come out into the sea at either end of the bay. When a sailboat glides out onto the blue we look back at a Riviera scene, truely a gift from the gods, and rightfully the playground of the world. Behind the blue sea spotted with white sails and boats of every description lies terraced splendor. Beach, Promenade, Impressive Hotels, the homes winding up into the foothills behind, and framing the whole picture the rugged contrasting mountains coming down to the sea on our far left and right dropping back in the middle to form this little pocket, the Shangri La of Cannes.

Behind that mountain range lies reality. Normal days of work mixed with the play, Army restrictions. Regular hours, uniforms and uniformity. Days of rain as well as sunshine and seasons of snow and wind. These are the things that test man and make life what it is, but always in life as in nature there are glimpses of beauty that substantiate the fantasy of imagination, and realize momentary escape. Such an interlude is the Riviera. A lovely spot were dreams come to life for us all. The soldiers on leave from war or the international celebrities who have seen and tasted every pleasure the world over. To us all, rich or poor, soldier or civilian, the Riviera is natural beauty personified.



FRANCE

RIVIERA INVASION



D-Day Glider landings near Lamotte, Southern France.

LE MUY
R.N.7
VAR
LA MOTTE
DRAGUIGNAN

"Wherever the Twain shall meet."

Meeting the F. F. I. at St. Tropez . . . women as well as men were prominent in the Maquis. The Frenchman pictured later received the Silver Star.

Another successful Anglo-American Liaison . . . British and American paratroopers rest near Le Muy during a lull in the fighting of "Operation Uppercut."

Ready for anything . . . A trooper's two best Allies are his rifle and the ground.

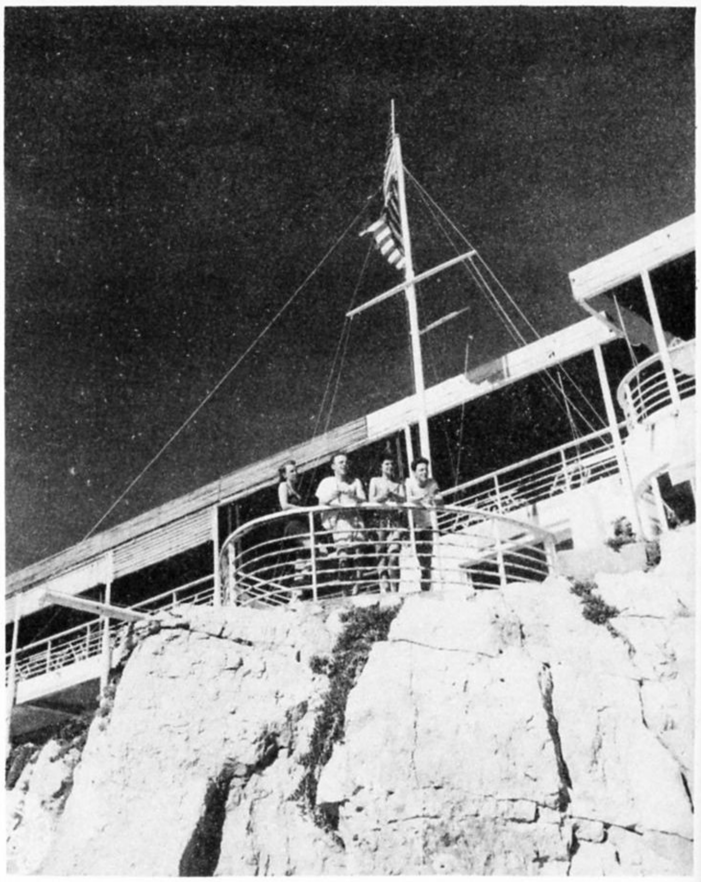
A local padre welcomes Americans to his church and France.

Wounded paratroopers receive medical aid near La Motte.

Picking up where he left off in Italy . . . A new war — a new friend.

RIVIERA FURLOUGH

Newlyweds in Cannes — Major and Mrs. May on two bicycles built for one.



Eden Rock — Soldier Playground.

LE PEDALO
28

American nurses ride a pedalo.

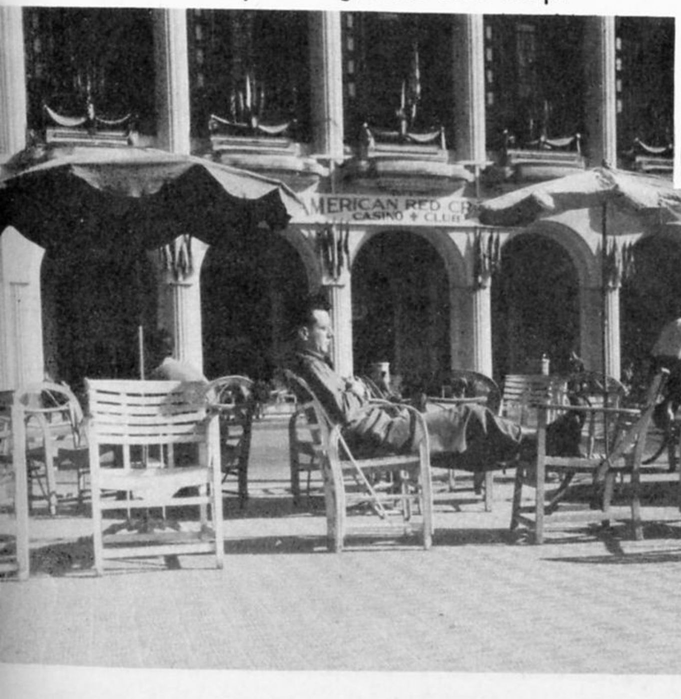
Some flew down and shined their boots for a 7-day kill.

To the beach, Bertrand.

Forgetting Boulevard French for the language as it is in the books.

Some scenery.

In the early morning, some even sleep.



FRANCE

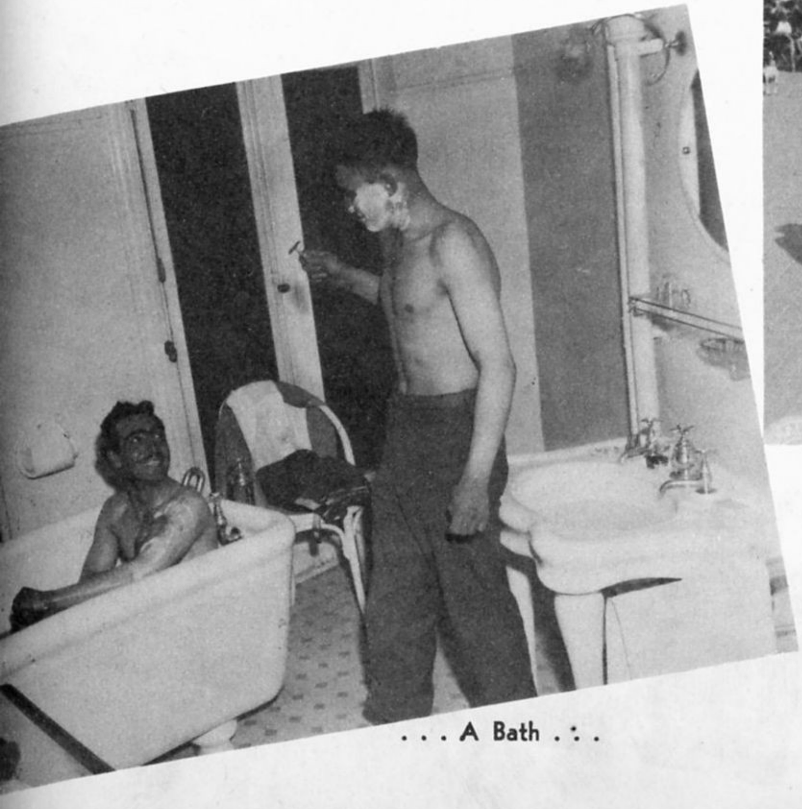
LE PEDALO 7
LE PEDALO

It's nice in Nice.

Hotel Negresco.

. . . A Bed . . .

RIDIN' HIGH—IT SURE HAS JUMPIN' BEAT!



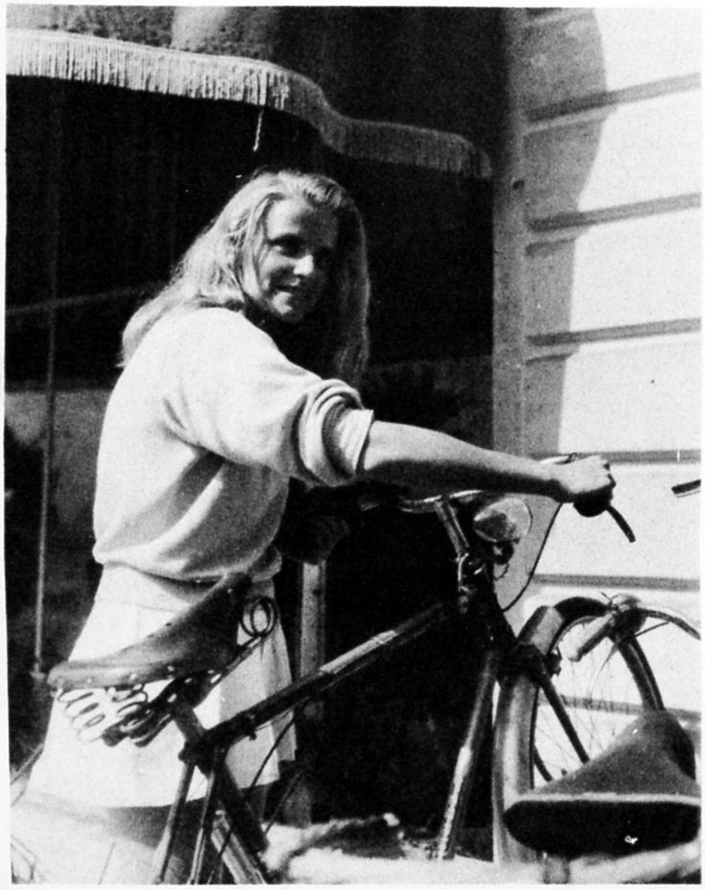
. . . A Bath . . .

. . . And a Babe.

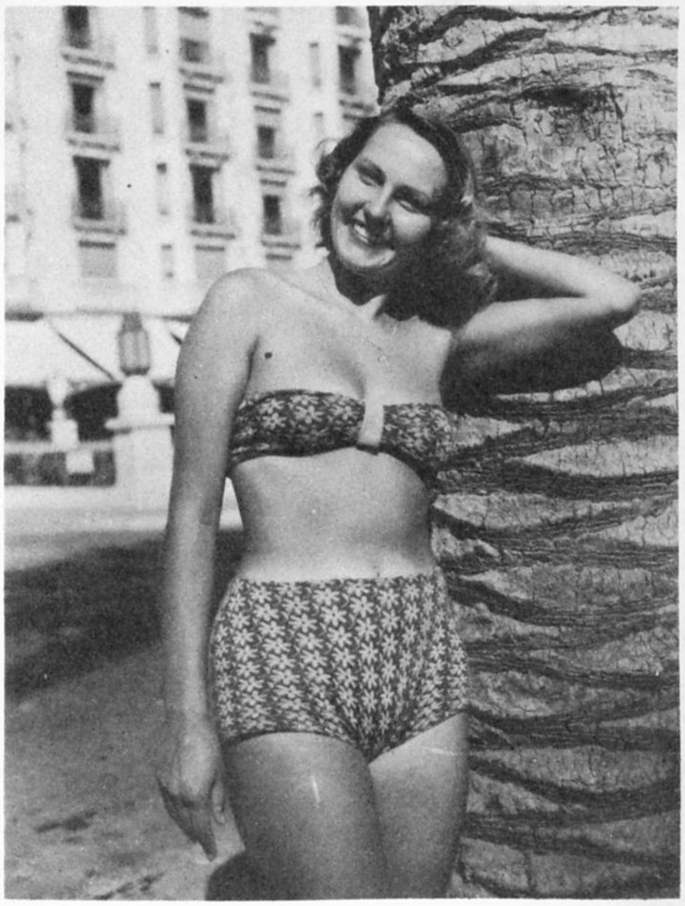
FRANCE

RIVIERA FURLOUGH

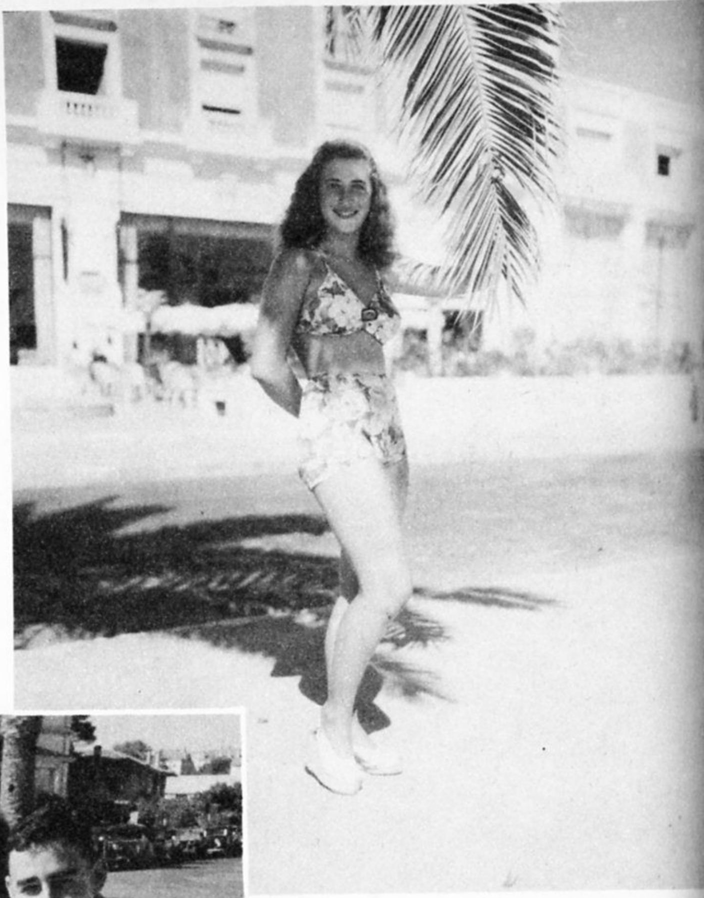
DEAR MOM, IT WAS A TOUGH WAR!

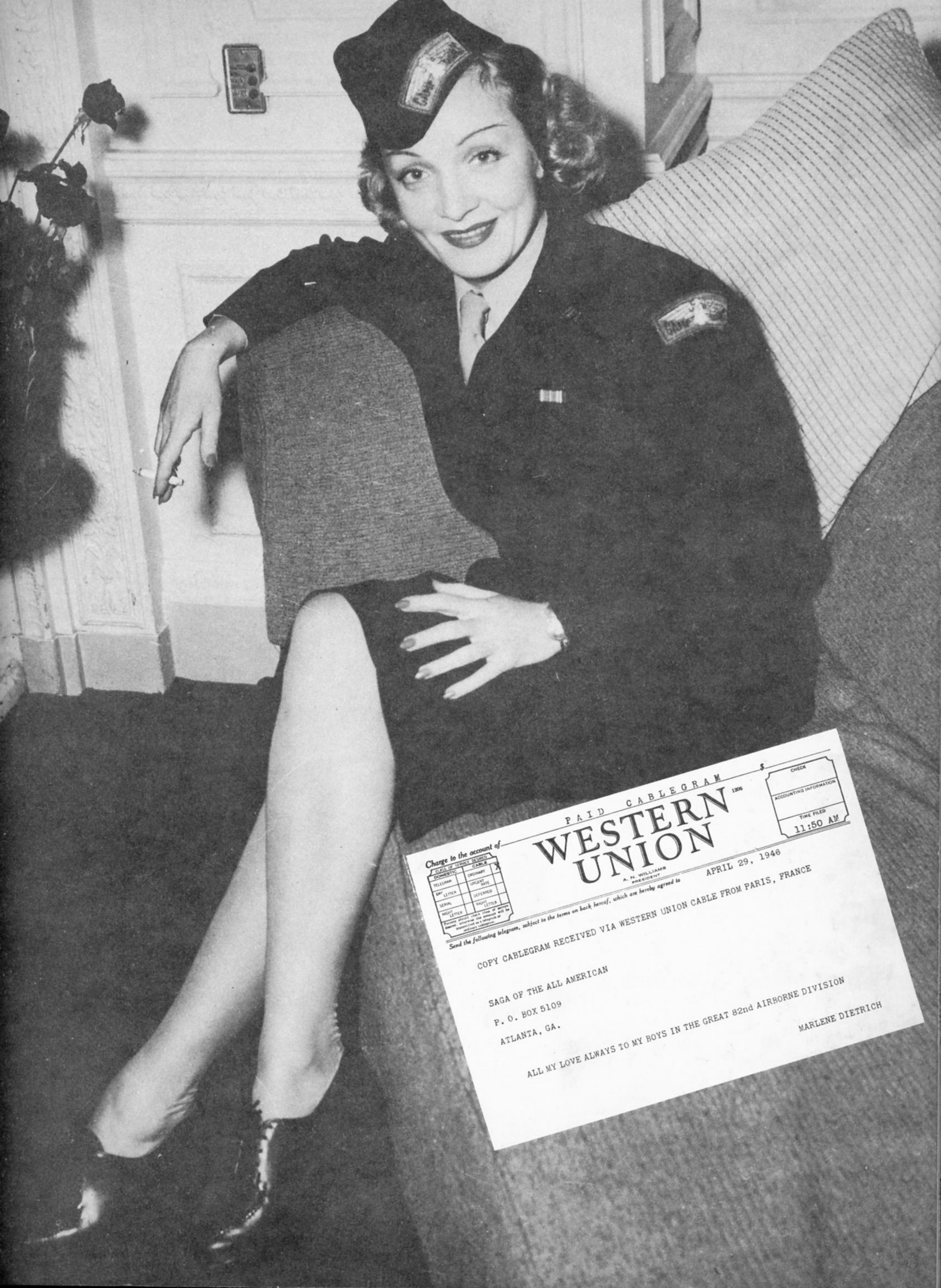


CANNES



FRANCE
RIVIERA RESIDENTS





PAID CABLEGRAM

1206

WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

CHECK	
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION	
TIME FILED	11:50 AM

Charge to the account of

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED			
DOMESTIC		CABLE	
TELEGRAM		ORDINARY	X
DAY LETTER		URGENT RATE	
SERIAL		DEFERRED	
NIGHT LETTER		NIGHT LETTER	

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

APRIL 29, 1946

COPY CABLEGRAM RECEIVED VIA WESTERN UNION CABLE FROM PARIS, FRANCE

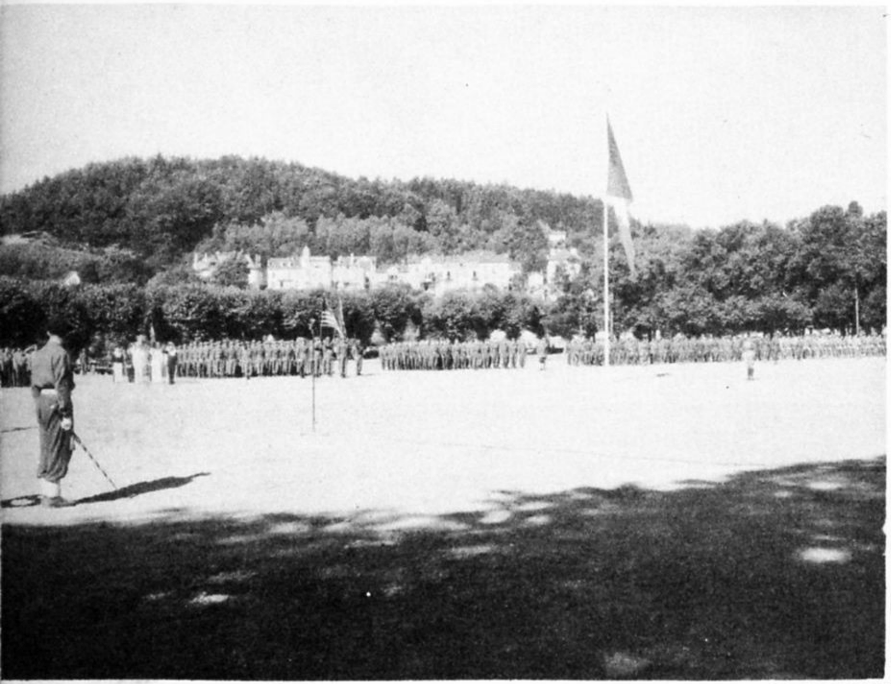
SAGA OF THE ALL AMERICAN
P. O. BOX 5109
ATLANTA, GA.

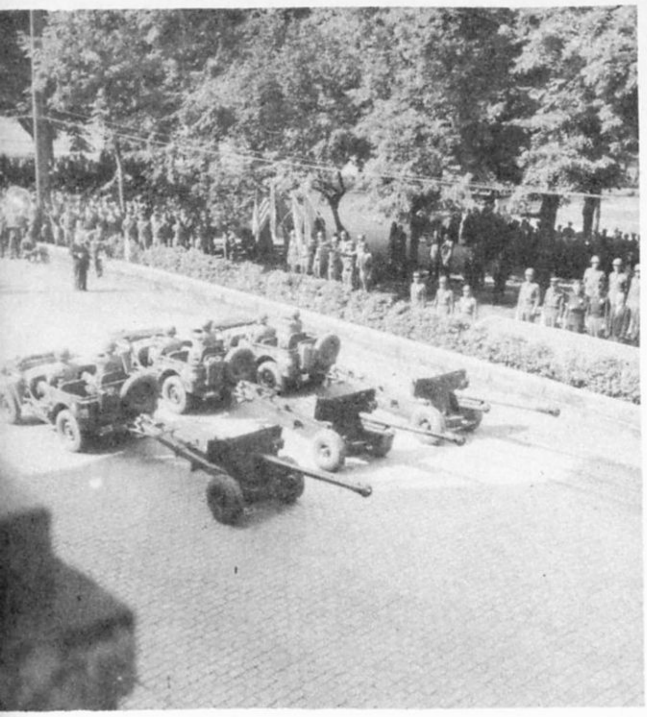
ALL MY LOVE ALWAYS TO MY BOYS IN THE GREAT 82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION

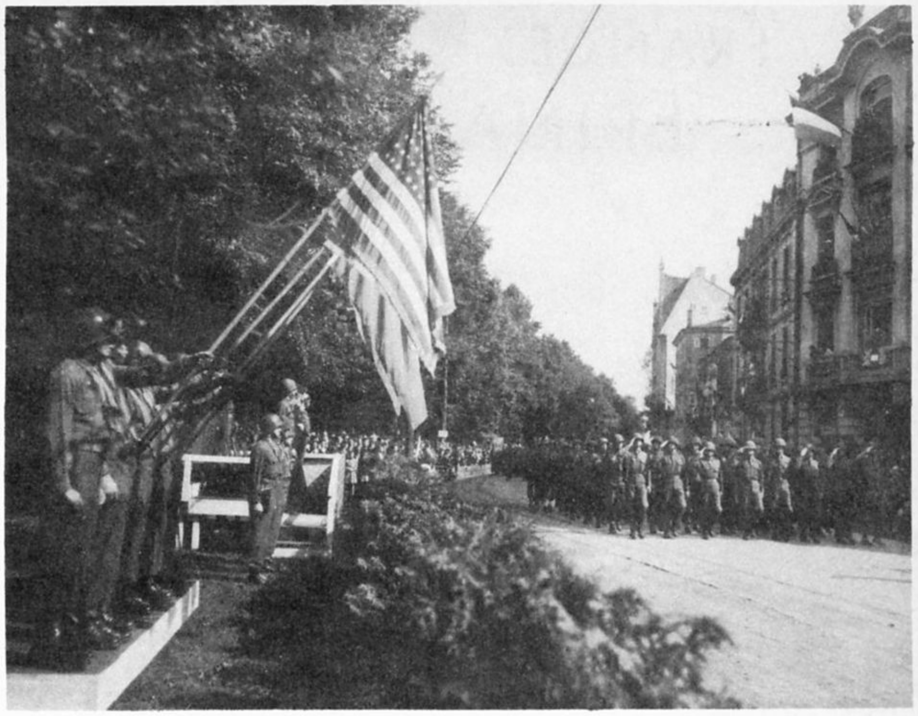
MARLENE DIETRICH

FRANCE
EPINAL

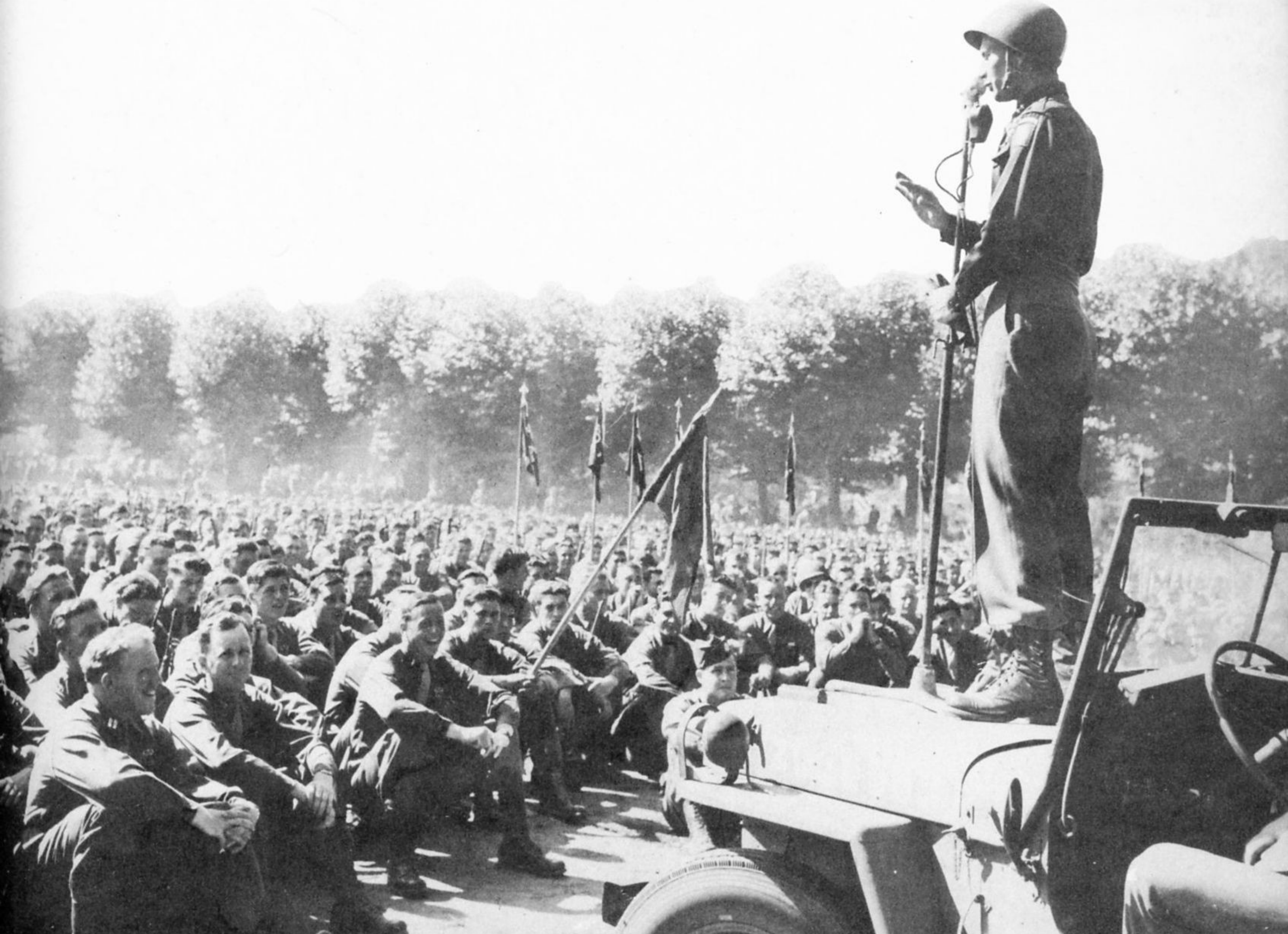
BASTILLE DAY
JULY 14, 1945



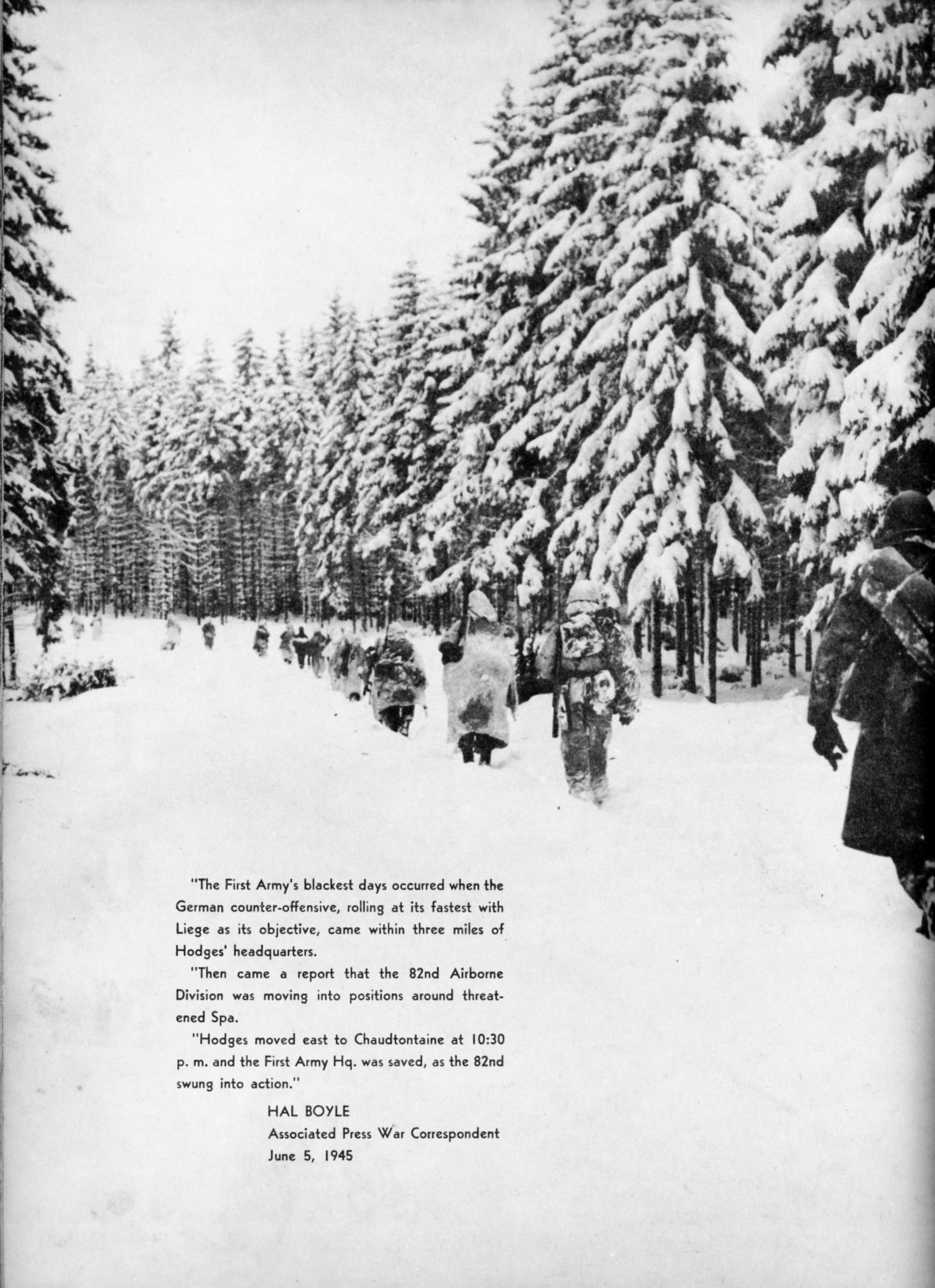




FOURTH OF JULY PARADE, EPINAL 1945



GEN. GAVIN TELLS HIS MEN THAT THEY'VE BEEN SELECTED TO OCCUPY BERLIN



"The First Army's blackest days occurred when the German counter-offensive, rolling at its fastest with Liege as its objective, came within three miles of Hodges' headquarters.

"Then came a report that the 82nd Airborne Division was moving into positions around threatened Spa.

"Hodges moved east to Chaudtontaine at 10:30 p. m. and the First Army Hq. was saved, as the 82nd swung into action."

HAL BOYLE
Associated Press War Correspondent
June 5, 1945

BELGIUM

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

(Extracted from Gen. Gavin's personal report to a War Department historian)

THE 82nd Airborne Division, still awaiting reinforcements and much resupply at its base camps in the general area of Rheims, France, moved 150 miles with its first combat elements going into position in less than 24 hours and the entire Division closing in a new combat area in less than 40 hours from the time of the initial alert. It fought, stopped, and held against the best Divisions the German leader, Field Marshal Von Runstedt, could pit against it, protecting the North shoulder of the Allied line, preventing the German break-through from turning North to Liege, Belgium, and providing a safe area through which trapped Allied units could withdraw from the break-through area. This it did despite the fact that its lines at times stretched more than 25,000 yards. Then, turning to the offense, the Division set the pace for other units, forcing the enemy back through his famed Siegfried Line.

Men fought, at times, with only rifles, grenades and knives against German armor. They fought with only light weapons in waist - deep snow, in blizzards, in near zero temperatures and in areas where heavy forestation and the almost total lack of roads presented problems that only men of stout hearts and iron determination could overcome.

The battles of "The Bulge," ranking on a par with the brightest victories in the Division's history, also proved again that planes and materiel are important but the most important essential of all is a fighting heart, a will-to-win. To the troopers of the line goes full credit for the brilliant record they made in the name of the 82nd Airborne Division.

THE 82ND Airborne Division was located at Camps Suippes and Sissone, France undertaking normal ground divisional training when, on December 17, 1944, first orders were received to move to the east. At about 1930 hours, while at dinner with the Staff, I received a 'phone call from Colonel Eaton, Chief of Staff XVIII Corps (Airborne). He stated that he had just received a call from SHAEF to the effect that the situation on the front to the east appeared to be critical; that the airborne divisions were to be prepared to move 24 hours after daylight the following day; that the Corps Commander, General Ridgway, was in England and could not be contacted immediately. I instructed Colonel Eaton to issue orders to the Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division, Brigadier General McAuliffe, to prepare immediately for movement in accordance with the SHAEF estimate, 24 hours after daylight. I assembled my Staff in the Division War Room at 2000 hours. I had listened to a radio news broadcast at 1800 hours and was aware of the fact that a German penetration was being made in the direction of St. Vith.

The division was ready for a quick move, since, because of our past usual quick commitments, we have maintained a high degree of readiness as a standard operating procedure. A basic load of ammunition was in the hands of each regiment, complete in all respects. Two "K" and two "D" rations for the Division were at hand and could be distributed in a matter of hours. All weapons, uniform and equipment were up to an operating standard. The Staff assembled at 2000 hours when the initial directive was issued that started their planning.

I called General March at Camp Suippes at about 1945 hours, giving him the situation and alerting him for the move. Unit commanders at Camp Sissone were assembled with the Staff in the War Room at 2100 hours when the situation was outlined to them and a tentative plan for the movement to Bastogne issued. At about 2130 hours I received a call from the Chief of Staff, XVIII Corps (Airborne), who said the Corps had orders to move without delay in the direction of Bastogne where further orders would be received. He also said that Corps was to be attached to the First United States Army. After further discussion, I decided that the 82nd Airborne Division would move approximately one hour after daylight and move in the direction of Bastogne. The 101st Airborne Division was to move at 1400 hours, 18 December, also in the direction of Bastogne. At that time Oise Base Section was devoting all its efforts to pulling in all transportation off the roads to provide the necessary lift for both divisions.

At 2330 I left with my G-1, Lt. Col. Alfred W. Ireland, and my Aide, Captain Hugo V. Olson, for the command post of the First United States Army at Spa. The drive was very difficult due to the general conditions of the roads, rain and fog, and the absence of bridges on a number of important highways. I reported to General Hodges in person at about 0900 hours 18 December. At that time the situation appeared rather vague. The first reports of enemy contact at Stavelot were just coming in. It was reported that an enemy force at Stavelot had driven our troops across the river and had succeeded in capturing and destroying a large map supply. They apparently blew the bridge upon driving out our forces. The situation south and west of Stavelot was unknown except that the enemy had evidently overrun our front positions. There appeared to be a large force of U. S. troops centered on St. Vith. There also appeared to be a large pocket of the 106th Division surrounded in the Eifel.

After some staff discussion, the Commanding General, First U. S. Army, decided to attach the 82nd Airborne Division to V Corps. It was to close in an area in the vicinity of Werbomont. The 101st Airborne Division was to be attached to VIII Corps and would assemble in the vicinity of Bastogne. I placed a request with the First U. S. Army for tanks, TD's, 4.2's and medium artillery, and left the CP for Werbomont. At this time there was considerable movement west of service and command installations in and around Spa. It was apparently being evacuated.

I arrived at Werbomont at approximately mid-afternoon and immediately made a reconnaissance of the entire area. It offered excellent defensive possibilities, being the dominant terrain for many miles from the crossroads at Werbomont. At about 1600 hours I contacted an engineer platoon at the bridge at Hablemont. The bridge was prepared for demolition and they reported the Germans were in the immediate vicinity, coming over the main highway from Trois-Ponts. At that time a number of civilians were very excitedly moving west on the Trois-Ponts — Werbomont road. They all stated that the Germans had passed Trois-Ponts and were "coming this way." I made a reconnaissance down the valley from Hablemont to the Ambleve River but encountered no enemy or any indication of his whereabouts. One bridge was still intact at Forge and was not prepared for demolition. Upon returning to Hablemont I asked the Lieutenant at that bridge about it, but he appeared to be fully occupied with the means at his disposal of blowing the bridge at Hablemont. At about 1630 hours I left for Bastogne to meet General McAuliffe.

I reported to the VIII Corps CP in Bastogne and had a short conversation with General Middleton and talked to his G-2 and G-3. At that time the Corps CP was preparing to move. The situation was very vague. The 28th Division officers present seemed to feel that their division had been overrun, although they were uncertain of its whereabouts. I met General McAuliffe, gave him his orders that he was to assemble in Bastogne, reporting to the Corps Commander of the VIII Corps, and I left, moving north and passing through Houffalize shortly after dark. I arrived in Werbomont at approximately 2000 hours, and about that time the first large group of 82nd vehicles started arriving.

A command post was established and troops disposed as rapidly as they arrived. Drivers and troops were very tired, having by this time been up for two nights. All during the night the staff worked on closing the vehicles into Werbomont area. About two hours after daylight, December 19th, the division closed in that area.

In the meantime the first enemy contact was made at Hablemont. A road block of the 30th Division was contacted by a German armored reconnaissance party at about 1900 hours the 18th. I visited the locality at daylight December 19th and found about five armored vehicles, armored cars and SP's, knocked out, with several German dead lying about the road. About a platoon of 2nd Bn., 119th Infantry was present. They reported that all of their road block party proper, despite having knocked out the German reconnaissance party, had either been killed or captured or had moved east. It appeared quite clear that this was a reconnaissance party of a German armored column that had been endeavoring to move from Trois-Ponts to Werbomont and had succeeded in crossing the river at Forge. The Hablemont bridge was blown. At daylight, December 19, it was learned that the north-south road from Bastogne to Werbomont had been cut by the Germans in the vicinity of Houffalize. The depth of this penetration was unknown, but there were rumors from truck drivers that the Germans were on the road in the vicinity of Hotton.

At 1100 hours, December 19, orders were received to dispatch one infantry battalion and one platoon of TD's to the area north of Hotton to block and clear all approaches from Hotton to the north, northwest and northeast. Permission was later obtained from the Corps Commander to send the battalion to Barvaux.

During the afternoon of December 19, information and orders were received from Headquarters XVIII Corps (Airborne), which had been established about one mile north of Werbomont, that the First Army was to hold along the general line Stoumont-Stavelot-Malmedy and counterattack in the direction of Trois-Ponts to halt the enemy's advance to the northwest. The XVIII Corps (Airborne) assumed command of the sector generally south of the Ambleve River to include Houffalize.

In compliance with instructions received from Corps Headquarters, the 504th Parachute Infantry advanced and seized the high ground northwest of Rahier, and the 505th Parachute Infantry advanced and seized the high ground in the vicinity of Haut-Bodeux. The 508th Parachute Infantry sent one company to the crossroads one mile east of Bra. The regiment, less one company, occupied the high ground in the vicinity of Chevron. The 325th Glider Infantry remained at Werbomont, having sent the third battalion to the vicinity of Barvaux and one company to the crossroads at Manhay. Those dispositions were consolidated during the night of December 19-20, and patrols pushed to the front to gain contact with the enemy.

Shortly after daylight, December 20, I met Colonel Reuben Tucker, 504th Commanding officer, in the town of Rahier, at which time he had just received intelligence from civilians to the effect that approximately 125 vehicles, including approximately 30 tanks, had moved through the town the afternoon before, moving in the direction of Cheneux.

The information appeared to be reliable. It posed some interesting problems. It appeared that the Germans had given up hope of crossing the creek obstacle at Hablemont with their heavy armor and had turned to the main road through Stoumont-LaGlieze. If this were the case, the seizure of the bridge over the Ambleve River at Cheneux was imperative if their further movement was to be blocked.

I ordered Colonel Tucker to move into the town of Cheneux without delay and, conditions permitting, to seize the bridge. It was imperative that the bridge be seized. If 125 armored vehicles engaged the 504th in the country around Rahier, we were in for some anxious moments, but we had come a long way to find the German and we had beaten, in the past, better units than these appeared to be, even with our limited means. There was but one thing to do, and that was to close with the enemy as rapidly as possible and destroy him by any means possible. But the seizure of the bridge was imperative.

Initial contact was made at the western exit of Cheneux by a patrol which had been sent from Rahier by the first battalion of the 504th. They fired on a German motorcyclist who was accompanied by a small patrol. Contact was first made on the ridge one-half mile west of Cheneux. This small patrol was followed by approximately a company of Germans moving along the ridge. They were engaged at once and a heavy fight took place, lasting all day long. This German force, we know now, was the advance guard of a reinforcement battalion of the first SS Panzer Division. The 1st battalion of the 504th drove them back into Cheneux, the battalion commander setting up his command post in a building in the western limits of Cheneux on the main road during the hours of darkness of the first night. During the day, firing could be heard and some vehicular movement could be observed in the direction of LaGlieze.

I went to the 505th Parachute Infantry where I found that they had contacted some engineers who remained in Trois-Ponts. They had occasionally been under fire, but no major German force had moved through the town. All civilians in these northern regimental areas reported that many Germans and much armor had passed through. The situation south of the 505th in the direction of Vielsalm was vague. Reconnaissance was pushed in that direction.

On the afternoon of December 20 at about 1600 hours I was called to Headquarters XVIII Corps (Airborne) to receive orders for an advance to the Vielsalm-Hebronval line. In the meantime, contact had been established with a German SS force, later identified as the 1st SS Panzer Division at Cheneux. First contacts indicated that they were well equipped and reasonably trained troops who would give us a good fight. It was with some difficulty that our first prisoners were taken. At about 1630, prior to leaving the division advance CP, which was now established at Hablemont, I had all unit commanders assembled, including the battalion commanders of the 508th. It was felt that speed was vital and if we were to move to Vielsalm with the mission to be assigned us by XVIII Corps (Airborne), we had to move without delay, regardless of conditions of light or darkness.

At Corps Headquarters I received information that they were advancing to the southeast and establishing an active defense along the line Vielsalm-Hebronval-Laroche; that this division, 82nd Airborne, would establish a defensive line from contact with the 30th Division, in the vicinity of LaGlieze, to Cheneux - Trois-Ponts - Grant Halleux - Vielsalm - Salmchateau - Hebronval. Contact was to be immediately established with units reportedly cut off in the area of Vielsalm - St. Vith. The Third Armored Division was on our right and was to hold the sector from Hebronval west.

Orders to accomplish this were issued at the division CP at Hablemont shortly before dark, December 20. Units moved promptly and by daylight were on their objectives, well organized and prepared to defend. Regiments were in the line in the order, left to right: 504, 505, 508, 325. One battalion of the 325 was held in division reserve in the vicinity of LaVaux. The division forward CP was established in the town of Lierneux at the railroad crossing on the northern edge of the town.

In Vielsalm, contact was made with General Hasbrouck who had established the CP of the 7th Armored Division in the town. The division was then fighting around St. Vith. West of Vielsalm, General Jones had established the CP of the 106th Division at Renceveaux. From a visit to both of these officers, I learned that the 7th Armored Division, except for battle losses, was intact and fighting with unit integrity. The 106th Division appeared to be rather badly chewed up and had but one regiment, the 424th Infantry, remaining, with some division artillery and divisional units. There were also present a regiment of the 28th Division, the 112th Infantry, in addition to a number of Corps and larger units such as medium artillery.

On the left of the division very heavy fighting was taking place in the vicinity of Cheneux, where the German 1st SS Panzer Division was making a desperate and all-out effort to drive out the first battalion of the 504th. Further south at Trois-Ponts, and extending down to Grand Halleux, determined, apparently well planned and executed attacks were being made with increasing strength against the very thinly held front of the 505th. On the south, the 508th and the 325 had no contact with the enemy. The division Reconnaissance Platoon was pushed south. Information available indicated that the Germans were moving in great strength to the west, having passed Houffalize, and were moving towards the Meuse River. The Third Armored Division, which was supposed to be on the division's right, could not be contacted. I believe that on this date a reconnaissance party may have established contact.

On December 21, I visited the CP's of the 7th Armored and 106th Divisions with the Corps Commander of XVIII Corps (Airborne), General Ridgway. The situation in the vicinity of St. Vith appeared to be critical. The town was being overwhelmingly attacked in several directions, and there appeared to be little prospect of preventing its being cut off. The Corps Commander informed me that his original plan was for the 30th Division to attack south from Stavelot to relieve the situation at St. Vith and for the Third Armored to attack on the right of the 82nd so as to drive in the Germans moving to the west. On this date, December 21, however, only the narrow neck of land from Vielsalm to Salmchateau, held by the 82nd Airborne Division, connected the St. Vith forces with remaining forces of the First Army. Its retention would be decisive.

The fighting at Cheneux was increasing in bitterness. On this date the first battalion of the 504th, assisted by a company of the third battalion of that regiment, made a final, all-out assault on the Germans in that town and in close hand-to-hand fighting, many of the parachute troops jumping aboard the German half-tracks and knifing the Germans at their posts, the Germans were driven back across the Ambleve River and our troops seized the bridge. In this attack we destroyed a considerable amount of armor and killed and captured many Germans from the 1st SS Panzer Division.

Farther to the south and east, the 505th Parachute Infantry was having very hard fighting with the remainder of the 1st SS Panzer Division. The 505th had initially sent a covering force east of the Salm River in the vicinity of Trois-Ponts. Through sheer weight of numbers this small force was finally driven to the river line where it held. Being very much overextended, the regiment managed to hold by diagnosing or estimating the point of German main effort from time to time and then marshalling all available infantry as quickly as possible, beating off the attack at that point. This process was repeated, where necessary, day and night until finally the German attacks waned in their intensity about December 23.

The 508th Parachute Infantry on the Vielsalm-Salmchateau front was without enemy contact except for patrols. The 325th Glider Infantry, aided by the Division Reconnaissance Platoon, had established contact with enemy forces several miles south of their front lines.

On December 21, I was instructed by the Corps Commander to make a reconnaissance of the divisional area with a view to withdrawing, after the extrication of the St. Vith forces, to a suitable defensive position that would tie in with the divisions on my right and left. To date, no firm contact had been established with the Third Armored Division. The merits of the present defensive position were discussed, and it was agreed that the Thier-du-Mont line offered splendid defensive possibilities, provided it could be continued on our right. As well as I could determine, however, there were no friendly troops except light reconnaissance elements west of Hebronval.

I objected to the withdrawal, but the Corps Commander explained that, regardless of my wishes in the matter, it might be necessary to require the division to withdraw. It was quite evident at this time that if a major German attack developed from the south, threatening the right of the division, its continued occupation of the salient extending out to Vielsalm would be costly in life and to no advantage after the extrication of the St. Vith forces. It was emphasized by the Corps Commander that it was absolutely necessary to secure properly the withdrawal of the St. Vith forces by holding and defending our present positions.

A reconnaissance was undertaken and at its completion it was quite clear that there was but one reasonably good defensive position, and that it was the Trois-Ponts-Basse-Bodeux-Bra-Manhay line. At the direction of the Corps Commander, a reconnaissance was also made of a position farther to the rear, generally along the Cheneux-Rahier-Chevron-Werbomont line. On December 22, I went to Manhay where I met General Rose, commanding the Third Armored Division. He stated that he was covering a concentration of other forces and that his front was so extended that he could not occupy and hold in strength the terrain west of Hebronval.

From my view point, it was obvious that the loss of Regne-Lierneux ridge would result in the complete neutralization of the defensive capabilities of the right portion of the division sector. This ridge dominated the entire road out from Vielsalm to Bra. This was the only road not south of the Trois-Ponts-Werbomont road. In addition, all of the division's installations and division artillery were located in the Lierneux-Goronne - Vielsalm valley. Accordingly, orders were issued to the 325th Glider Infantry to extend its right flank and seize and hold Regne and the ridge extending north therefrom. This ridge had to be held at any cost.

On the afternoon of December 22, an enemy force of approximately 100 vehicles of all types, preceded by about 25 tanks, advanced north through Ottre. The tanks entered Joubieval. They were permitted to close up, then brought under devastating artillery fire. Artillery observers who remained on the outpost line on the ridge immediately north of Ottre kept the column under close observation and put very effective fire on it. This unit was later identified as a portion of the 21 SS Panzer Division. At 1700, December 22, the outpost of the 325 was forced to withdraw. The enemy build-up was increasing in intensity on our southern front.

At the direction of the Division Commander, the Division Engineer conducted a thorough study and reconnaissance of the southern portion of the division sector. It became clearly evident that the German could not bring armor to bear against the sector anywhere between Salmchateau and the Fraiture crossroads except by bringing it up the Petite-Langlir road. If the Petite-Langlir bridge could be blown, he would be incapable of bringing armor to bear anywhere within this 10,000 yard gap without approaching up the main road towards Salmchateau, which was well covered.

The possibility of canalizing his armored attack was obvious, and stops were taken to take advantage of this. Early on December 22, orders were issued to the Engineer Battalion to move without delay and prepare the Petite-Langlir bridge for demolition and to destroy it upon hostile threat. Thorough and detailed preparations were made, possibly too thorough, because as the demolition party moved south from Ottre it encountered a large group of German vehicles coming northward. The Germans had the bridge. This was at about 1400 hours. Evidently thoroughness in preparation had cost us the bridge.

During the nights of December 22-23 an engineer patrol, led by Major J. C. H. Lee, Jr., made its way behind the enemy lines to the bridge over the creek south of Potite-Langlir and destroyed the bridge while it was actually being used by German vehicles. They displayed unusual gallantry and perseverance in the performance of their task.

In the following 24 hours, enemy pressure built up in intensity all along the southern front. It was easily handled south of Thier - du - Mont. The enemy, however, showed promise of getting entirely out of hand on the right, apparently wide open beyond Regne. Returning to the left flank, the German forces appeared to be cut off in the vicinity of LaGlieze but were fighting a very intense engagement with the 30th Division on our left. Their occasional isolated efforts to cross the Ambleve River were easily dealt with by small patrols from the 504th Prcht Inf.

I therefore ordered the release of the Division reserve battalion of the 325 to the Regimental Commander of that regiment and ordered one battalion of the 504, and 2nd Battalion, to move at once to the ridge 5,000 yards southwest of Lierneux. These troops went into position during daylight of December 23. On this date the enemy attacked in considerable strength and overran the town of Regne. The 325 was ordered to counterattack and retake the town. The retention of this ridge was most vital if the Division was to accomplish its mission of extricating the St. Vith forces. Supported by attached armor, and with unusual gallantry and elan, the 325 attacked and retook the town and held it until later ordered to withdraw.

It was on this occasion that the Regimental Adjutant of a regiment of the 2nd SS Panzer Division was captured with the orders for the advance of the following day. In the confusion, incident to the retaking of the town by the 325, he had been sent forward by his Regimental Commander to learn the true situation. During his reconnaissance, he found himself aboard a motorcycle sidecar in the outskirts of Regne when our troops were retaking the town. He was captured with the town and had the orders on his person. They proved to be of great value, since they gave us definite information of the enemy's intentions for the following several days.

It was becoming increasingly evident that the German was determined to ultimately reach Werbomont and move north towards Aywaille and Leige. Colonel Billingslea, Commanding Officer of the 325th Glider Infantry, was ordered to extend his right flank to include the Fraiture ridge. No firm contact with the 3rd Armored Division on our right appeared possible.

The Fraiture crossroads began to assume increasing importance. Inquiry was made on several occasions of the Commanding General of XVIII Corps (Airborne) as to what was being done to insure its retention. On December 22, I made a personal reconnaissance from Ievigne to Fond de la Justice to Manhay. Quite a number of armored vehicles were in the vicinity of Manhay, and some were on the ridge 1½ miles south thereof. The 3rd Armored Division CP was in Manhay. A conversation with the Division Commander made it apparent that they were incapable of committing sufficient strength to the crossroads to guarantee its retention by our troops.

From my viewpoint, its loss would mean that German armor which we had successfully turned back from Trois-Ponts to Regne, with the aid of both terrain and a very active defense, would bypass the Division and occupy the Lierneux-Regne ridge mass, thus preventing us from accomplishing our present mission of covering the withdrawal of the St. Vith troops. I accordingly ordered Colonel Billingslea to again extend his right flank and to include in his defensive organization the crossroads southwest of Fraiture. This he did by sending Company F, under the command of Captain Woodruff, to the area. The situation all along the southern front was becoming critical when I visited the battalion commanders of the 325th several times during the period December 22-24. On the afternoon of December 23, at about 1700 hours, I checked the dispositions along the Fraiture ridge. At this time, riflemen were scattered 100 to 200 yards apart. There was a little antitank defense, and the possibility of defending the ridge against a major German attack appeared nothing less than fantastic. On the other hand, nothing could be spared from the other fronts, since the situation was much the same in other sectors, although the threat was not as great. The attacks of the 1st SS Panzer Division on our left began to wane.

On the afternoon of December 23, at about 1730 hours, I arrived at the CP of Captain Gibson in the town of Fraiture. It was then under heavy mortar fire. A considerable volume of small arms fire could be heard to the south and west. SCR-300 contact was made with Captain Woodruff at the crossroads. He stated that he was under terrific attack which was completely engulfing his small unit. I moved on foot from Fraiture towards the crossroads and managed to reach the edge of the woods several hundred yards beyond the town.

It was clearly evident that the attack at the crossroads was an all-out affair of great magnitude. As it developed, it was the attack of a regiment of the 2nd SS Panzer Division supported by attached armor, attacking with the mission of driving up the main highway to Werbomont. The one company was soon completely overrun. During the hours of darkness, in desperate, close-quarters fighting, Captain Woodruff managed to extricate about 40 men. They accounted for many Germans in fighting their way out, and rejoined their battalion commander in the vicinity of Fraiture.

At this point it was evident that there was nothing to prevent the German forces from entering the rear of the Division area, which was now closely engaged along its entire 25,000-yard front.

I moved to the CP of the reserve battalion in the region southwest of Lierneux, arriving there at about dark. I issued verbal orders to the battalion commander, Major Wellems, outlining the situation to him and directing him to secure the right flank as far west as Malemore. I then moved without delay via Tri le Chesling to Manhay, the CP of the 3rd Armored Division. Here I found one MP on duty at the crossroads and the town completely abandoned. I then moved without delay to Corps Headquarters to explain the situation to them and obtain further assistance in holding the main highway which was out of my sector, but the retention of which was necessary to the accomplishment of my mission.

By telephone, Colonel Tucker was told to be prepared to move the 504 Regimental Headquarters and one battalion to the vicinity of Lansival where he would take over the sector to the right of the Division. Two TD's were moved southwest of the Division CP at Bra to give it some protection from the direction of Manhay. I returned to the Division CP at Bra at approximately 2200. Upon my arrival there I learned by telephone from Corps that Manhay had fallen to the German attacking forces. There seemed to be some doubt about this, however, and due to the darkness and con-

"On New Year's day the Battalion (628 T. D.) was attached to XVIII Corps, Eighty-second Airborne Division. These were truely fighting men. A squad of the Eighty-second Airborne Division will take on a Company of the German Army, an Eighty-second Airborne Division Company will take on a German Battalion, and to assign any unit of the Eighty-second Airborne Division an objective is to know the objective will be taken and held." — From Victory T. D. — History of the great 628 Tank Destroyer Bn.

fusion it was impossible to determine exactly where anyone was. All units were informed of the situation and efforts made to get units under control and have the situation in hand so as to be able to engage the German forces on reasonably favorable terms at daylight.

At about daylight, XVIII Corps (Airborne) made available to me Combat command B of the 9th Armored Division under the command of General Hoge, which had been withdrawn from the St. Vith area. General Hoge reported to my CP at about 0700. At about 0545, December 24, Colonel Tucker was ordered to leave the smallest possible force in the northern sector and to move south to Bra by motor without delay. He had been given a warning order about 24 hours earlier. At 0645 the 505 was ordered to regroup one battalion, the 2nd and have it prepared to move in Division reserve without delay, warning orders having been given them to prepare for this prior to this time.

At 0820 verbal orders were issued to General Hoge to hold Malempre until further orders, to contact the 504 on his left and the 7th Armored on his right. The 7th Armored had been recommitted by XVIII Corps (Airborne), down the main road towards Manhay. Combat Command B, 9th Armored Division, and the 7th Armored Division were practically exhausted from the past week's fighting. They were very short of infantry, and, in the opinion of General Hoge, Combat Command B was incapable of a sustained defense or offense. However, Malempre had to be held and appropriate orders were issued.

At 1315 hours, General Hoge reported to me that he was holding Malempre. The situation in that sector, however, still appeared confused. This was further added to by the presence in the area of German troops wearing American uniforms and using American armor. It would appear certain that the Germans were fighting in Manhay, that they held the ridge south and east of Manhay, that we held Malempre and that we held Fraiture. Between Malempre and Fraiture, the 2nd Battalion of the 504th Parachute Infantry was fighting in the woods. This battalion, a veteran, experienced outfit, had as clear a picture as could be expected of the situation. Numerous Germans were endeavoring to attack through the woods to the northeast between Malempre and Fraiture. There was much close, bitter fighting and the Germans were very roughly handled by Major Wellem's battalion. He finally succeeded in stabilizing his position and containing the Germans, although his frontage was very great, particularly for the wooded sector in which he was fighting. The Germans were well equipped and armed and were fighting with unusual esprit. They were from the 2nd SS Panzer Division.

During the day of December 24, Colonel Tucker brought up his full regiment, less one battalion which he had left at Cheneux to contain the forces north of the river. That battalion was charged with holding the Ambleve River line from immediately north of Trois-Ponts to where contact was established with the 30th Division in the vicinity of LaGlieze, a frontage of approximately 12,000 — 15,000 yards, much of it closely wooded country and broken up terrain. However, since the situation was so critical on the right, and the German attack had apparently been beaten off on the left, no other course of action appeared practicable at the moment. The 505 appeared to have all it could do to continue to hold the Trois-Ponts — Grand Halleux line and the 508 was becoming heavily engaged on the Vielsalm-Salmchateau-Joubieval line.

In accordance with the warning order given me by the Corps Commander, similar warning orders were given to unit commanders to be prepared to withdraw, if necessary, to the Trois-Ponts-Erria-Manhay line. Early on December 24, therefore, they were directed to make small unit reconnaissance of the defensive positions. Sectors were allotted and missions assigned. A conference was held at Headquarters XVIII Corps (Airborne) at about 1330 hours, December 24th, at which time orders were issued for the voluntary withdrawal to the Corps defensive position. Division plans were completed and orders issued during the afternoon to effect the withdrawal starting after darkness.

I was greatly concerned with the attitude of the troops toward the withdrawal, the Division having never made a withdrawal in its combat history. The German was using every artifice conceivable to create doubt and confusion in the minds of American fighting units. He was using our arms, equipment and vehicles, frequently leaving their own abandoned and disabled at bottlenecks on the roads. False messages were being used, and Germans in American officers' uniforms were known to be in the rear areas. One trooper, who later was recaptured, was captured by Germans in American uniforms in the vicinity of Tri le Chesling. All of these factors made the prospects of a withdrawal most unpleasant. On the 24th, I published a memorandum to be read to the troops, emphasizing the dangers in the operation with which we were confronted, and I spent from early evening until after midnight visiting the troops of all battalions.

In all of the operations in which we have participated in our two years of combat, and they have been many of multitudinous types, I have never seen a better executed operation than the withdrawal on Christmas Eve. The troops willingly and promptly carried into execution all the withdrawal plans, although they openly and frankly criticized it and failed to understand the necessity for it. But everybody pitched in, and the withdrawal went smoothly.

Christmas Eve was a very cold, bright moonlight night. The enemy was closely engaged with us on the entire front from Trois-Ponts to Malempre, but there was in no locality any feeling of unusual pressure being exerted against us. All Unit Commanders, down to Platoon Leaders, I believe, I felt that they had the situation well under control. The rear area, except for some medium artillery which had been abandoned in fields off the main roads, was completely cleared of the St. Vith pocket forces.

The withdrawal started shortly after dark. Covering shells were to be withdrawn at four A. M. The 307 Abn. Engr. Bn. supported the withdrawal by blowing bridges over the Salm River, laying minefields and establishing roadblocks. This worked very well on the right with the 504 and the 325. The 508 was attacked in great force and had some close and intense fighting at the bridges over the Salm River before it finally withdrew. Its shell on Thier-du-mont was apparently cut off, but finally made its way back under the command of Major Taylor without the loss of a single man. All the troops, except for the shell, were in the valley in the vicinity of Gorronne where I saw them about 2200 hours, and everything was going smoothly.

At about 2300 hours I passed through St. Jacques on the way to the 505th Prcht. Inf. Command Post, which was at Dairomont. At St. Jacques, I met a platoon in a deployed formation moving north. They said they believed that there was a large force of Germans in the area and that they were looking for them. I went to the regimental CP. Here an unusual situation was becoming apparent. Earlier in the night a report was received from vehicle drivers that while driving their jeeps on a road in the vicinity of Basse-Bodeux they observed troops wearing full field equipment walking in the woods towards the east. These troops hit the ground and took cover, generally acting very evasive. Later in the night a lineman, checking his lines, had his jeep shot up by what he guessed were German troops in the rear area. This accounted for the platoon that I had met at St. Jacques being on its mission of clearing Germans from the rear area.

I talked to the regimental commander about the situation, and he believed that at this time a force of approximately 500 Germans were somewhere in the regimental rear area moving to the east. Their presence could hardly be accounted for unless they had escaped from the LaGlieze-Stoumont pocket. At first, we did not believe that there were German troops in the area, but piecing together all available intelligence seemed to establish the fact unmistakably. At this time, the regiment was under some pressure along the river line and had left a company in three platoon positions at the most likely crossing sites as a shell to cover the withdrawal of the regiment, which was now taking place. After discussing the situation for some time with the regimental commander, it was decided that the withdrawal would continue as planned; that by daylight the 505 would be on its defensive position with the area to its front wired and mined, and that it would be prepared to defend that position at all costs in coordination with the units on its right and left. This made it impractical for the regimental commander to divert any of his forces to a task of searching for the Germans. Orders were issued to proceed to new positions as previously planned and to be on the alert for loose German forces.

Several hours before daylight, one platoon positioned north of Grand Halleux was attacked by a German force of great strength. A heavy fight ensued. A number of Germans were killed and wounded, as well as troopers of the Division. Among those captured was an American major of the U. S. 30th Infantry Division. He had been captured in earlier fighting at LaGlieze, and the force that was accompanying him when captured was a force of approximately 500-800 Germans endeavoring to withdraw to their own lines east of the Salm River. During their withdrawal, they were rather well chewed up, but they nevertheless succeeded in reaching their lines except for several killed and captured. On December 25th, we realized that we had just succeeded in withdrawing through a hostile withdrawing force, which was a rather novel maneuver.

At daylight, December 25th, all regiments were on their positions, mining and wiring were under way, and all troops were dug in. Communications were being laid under great difficulty, because of the mountainous terrain, particularly in the 504 and 508 sectors. At daylight, I joined Major Gerard, commanding a battalion of the 325 in the town of Tri le Chesling on our right flank. Its occupation, in which contact was established with infantry of the 7th Armored Division on our right, finally buttoned up our defense. Contact was already established with the 30th Division on our left.

About two days after occupying this position, an attack was made by the 62nd Volks-Grenadier Division on our left and the 9th SS Panzer Division on our center. The 62nd V. G. Division in all of its operations proved to be of very poor quality and not well trained. They consistently lost patrols by having them destroyed by our outposts and they appeared to be very vulnerable to our own patrols.

The 9th SS Panzer Division appeared to be much better equipped and better trained. They launched an attack up the main Axis from Lierneux to Hablemont, hitting the 508 and 504 in a coordinated effort that was characterized by great dash and courage. The 3rd Battalion of the 508 was completely overrun. The men remained, however, manning their positions in the houses and foxholes. The battalion commander, Lt. Colonel Mendez, obtained the use of the reserve company of the 2nd Battalion of the 508 on his left, counter-attacked with great gallantry and determination, and drove the 9th SS Panzer from his positions, restoring his MLR. The Storm Troopers' losses were extremely heavy. From one field alone, 62 bodies were later removed.

On interrogation, some of the Storm Troopers stated that they had been accustomed to attacking with such dash and elan, yelling and firing their weapons, and the usual reaction of the enemy was to break and run as the Storm Troopers closed with them. They were frankly surprised to find troops who would man their positions after being overrun. The unit of the 9th SS attacking the 504 after overrunning the outpost of the 2nd Battalion of that regiment, were stopped and driven back. They told an identical story of their attack technique.

This ended all offensive efforts of the German forces in the Battle of the Bulge. About a week later the division attacked, completely overrunning the 62nd V. G. Division and the 9th SS Panzer Division, and capturing 2,500 prisoners, including 5 battalion commanders. It regained its former position on the Thier-du-mont heights.

From here, the Division withdrew to a rest area from which it was later committed to the attack east of St. Vith, attacking through deep snow over thickly wooded mountains and overrunning a considerable group of German defensive forces in a constant day and night attack lasting for six days. Ultimately they drove into the Siegfried Line to seize Udenbreth and the ridge extending south.

This attack was the most arduous in the Division's history and, at its end, probably the most bitterly fought, but the Division once again entered Germany and the seizure of Udenbreth placed the First U. S. Army in a position to attack down ridge lines all the way to Bonn.

From here, the Division moved to the Hurtgen sector where, as a member of XVIII Corps (Airborne) and later III Corps, it participated in the advance to the Roer River. Except for extensive minefields, extremely difficult road conditions and hostile artillery fire, the operation was not too difficult. The Division arrived on the Roer River and had completed detailed plans for a river crossing and the seizure of Nideggen east of the river when it was withdrawn on February 17th and returned to the Sissonne-Suippes, France, area.

On the 29th of December, the 82nd was augmented by the 740th tank Bn., Commanded by Lt. Col. George K. Rubel. To the troopers of the 82nd, this was as fine a bunch of tankers as was ever assembled. Col. Rubel in his book "Daredevil Tankers" described some of his experiences with the 82nd as follows:

I met with a very cool reception when I told them I had a tank battalion to help them out in this job. The staff, without exception, said that their past experience with tanks had been unsatisfactory. They stated that most of the time tanks had been a liability to them and not an asset — that the tankers would not keep up with their men. I told them that, although we had had very little combat, we would be very happy to be with them if their men would get up off the ground and fight. Their hostile attitude toward us disappeared about an hour after the attack jumped off, and was replaced by unstinted praise. Everywhere I went I heard the same story—"We wish you could have been with us before. That's the best tank battalion we ever saw. It's the only outfit that not only stayed with us —it's the only outfit we couldn't keep up with. We have never seen anyone who can shoot like they can; they can hit anything they see. With this combination—the 82nd Airborne and 740th, Jerry had better look out because we are on our way."

The Third Platoon, commanded by Lieutenant Powers, attacked with the Third Battalion 504 at 0400 hours on the 28th from a position just north of Wallerode, with its objective as the town of Herresbach. Light resistance by small arms and machine-gun fire was received along the entire route. When the attack had reached a point about 2,000 yards from Herresbach, information was received that the enemy was beginning a counterattack north along the road leading from Herresbach. They were in a column of two's on the road—the usual approach march formation for Jerry in this area. At 1900 hours, Lieutenant Powers moved his platoon to the head of our infantry column and placed infantry aboard the tanks. This combined force then moved down the road toward Herresbach and ran into the head of the German column—to their great surprise. They opened fire with all arms, and within two minutes time 65 Germans had been killed and 201 captured. No American soldier was even scratched in this battle — a remarkable occurrence. One enemy SP gun was destroyed in the town. The town was taken and defensive positions set up for the night. Two enemy counterattacks during the night were repulsed. Just when things appeared to be at their worst, the inevitable humorous angle entered the picture. Just before sundown, a column of about 20 Jerries, leading a horse-drawn gun, and being placed by a young German Lieutenant, was seen advancing north along the road toward Neuhof. Our roadblock, which consisted of four tanks and the remains of an infantry company, watched this strange procession as it approached. They held their fire and kept under cover. The German officer, unmindful of artillery rounds passing overhead, set about methodically organizing a roadblock in the same position where we had ours. Our tankers let him set his gun up, but just before it had been loaded the Infantry Captain stepped out from behind a tree and informed the German officer that he was his prisoner. At this time, the balance of the American roadblock crew stepped out, lined up the 20 odd German soldiers and relieved them of their weapons. The German officer, who spoke excellent English, was astounded but not speechless by any means. He grabbed his cap, threw it on the ground, jumped on it several times, and screamed, "That Damned Colonel! Of all the Damn fool people! Why did he send me down here! Didn't he know that this town had been captured! I quit! I quit! I quit!" He was informed that he definitely had quit and was soon hustled off to the PW cage. As he was being taken away, he philosophized that the entire German Army in the Ardennes was messed up. He said that the reason for the whole thing was that the American Army was so screwed up that they in turn had the Germans that way. How could they guess what the crazy Americans were going to do when the Americans themselves didn't know.

> *"We prize the good opinion the 82nd has of the 740th tank Bn., because we believe the 82nd Airborne Division to be the best fighting organization in any man's army."*
>
> *George K. Rubel,*
> *Lt. Col. 740th Tank Bn., Commanding.*

It was an Eighty-Second DEFENSE that first Stopped Von Runstedt in Bulge

Snow and bitter cold made the Bulge the Eighty-second's most uncomfortable operation.

Small weapons and big men is what stopped the Germans in Belgium.

It's coffee "Bud" but it ain't hot! What do you want egg in your beer?

As refugees are ushered toward safety, 82nd troopers lay a minefield to stop the Panzer Tigers.

COMMUNI

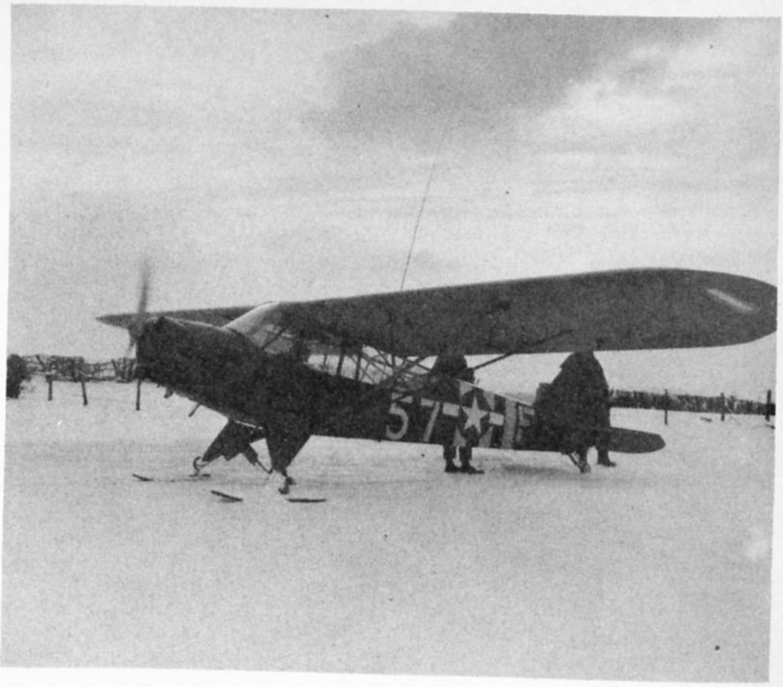
WIRE

RADIO

CATIONS

TRUCK

PLANE



Deep snow, broken wire, frozen batteries, slippery roads — armies had advanced or retreated through the Ardennes 4 times leaving a quagmire of road and wire. Communications' teams worked night and day.

508th moves into assembly area.

Up to the line of departure — another day another attack — s
it was for almost 2 years.

Overcoats are sacrificed for mobility before the attack, 325 near Erria.

307th Eng. clear a minefield and roadblock near Hierlot.

Moving out from St. Vith with armored support.

Glidermen ready for anything 325 at the crossroads.

General Jim and Friend Rifle.

82nd attack! in BELGIUM

504 and 740th with horses for ammunition carriers attack in a snowstorm.

325 drags equipment sleds in attack on Herresbach.

504 with the 740th near Herresbach.

GUN CAPTURE

With
the Eighty-second's 307 Engineers
at Adrimont, Belgium.

82nd Engineers use a prisoner to locate abandoned guns.

Prisoner stands with hands up as Engineers examine gun and then removes booby trap the troopers found in the breechblock.

Part of a buzz bomb dud. This tail and fin was 100 yards from the bomb.

Anzio to Arbrefontaine. This .50 cal. machine gun was in a B-26 shot down over the Anzio beachhead. It was used by 82nd troopers in Italy, Holland and the Bulge.

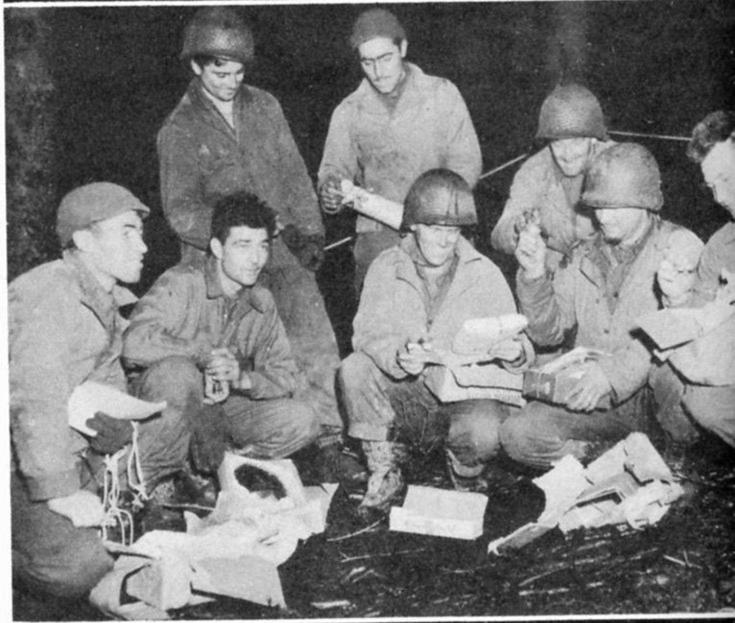
The Battle Buggy — 82nd Armored jeeps were whitewashed for winter.

German Propaganda
leaflets made good souvenirs.

With the 7th ARMORED

517th RETAKES ST. VITH

Worship . . .



Christmas

Louise and Dottie — coffee and doughnuts from England to Berlin.

The Stars and Stripes.

Decorations.

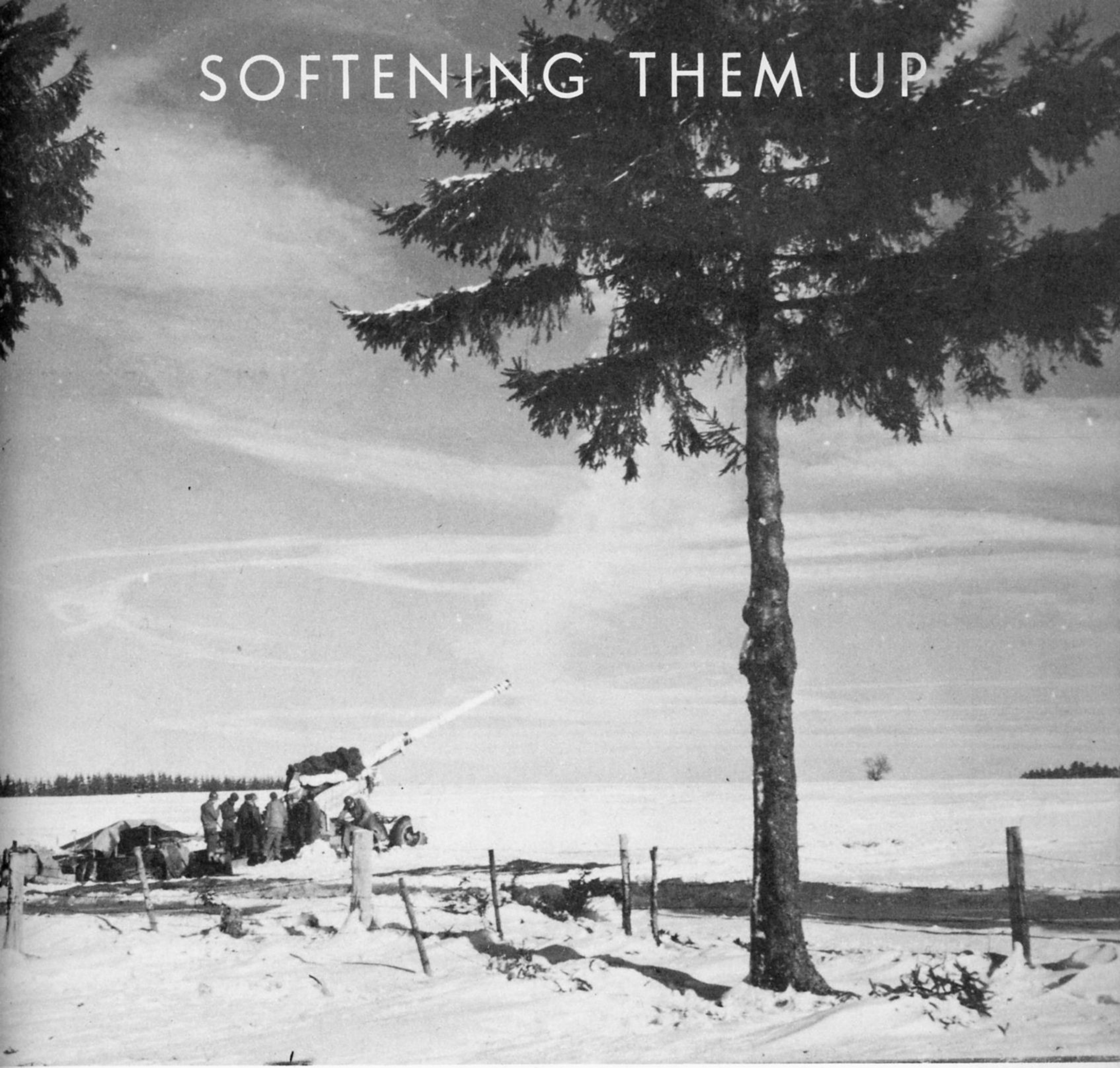
Ten Minute break.

Airborne Milkmaid.

In Between Battles . . .

A TROOPER RELAXES HOWEVER HE CAN

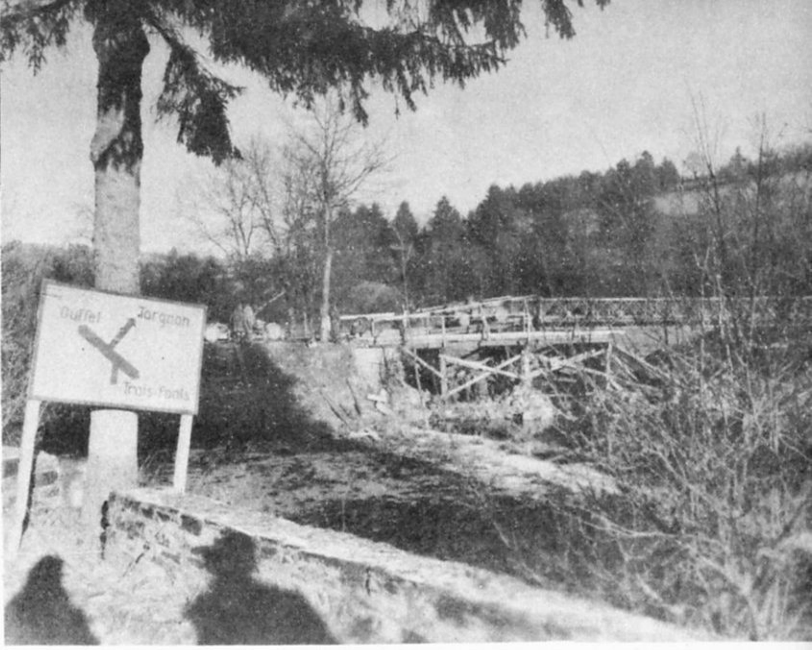
SOFTENING THEM UP



ARTILLERY

WHETHER WITH BIG GUNS ATTACHED OR WITH OUR OWN PARACHUTE AND PACK 75's THE VALUE OF ARTILLERY WAS APPRECIATED BY EVERY AIRBORNE INFANTRYMAN. FIGHTING WITHOUT IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE SUPPORT WHICH SOFTENS UP THE ENEMY BY BLASTING HIS DEFENSE AND TERRIFYING HIM FOR AN ATTACK.

Every town taken meant a bloody battle in the German's last big bid to win the war.


Duffel
Jorgnon
Trois-Ponts

Names on the sign — Battles on the ground.

The 82nd's 307th Engineers worked night and day blocking or building bridges, clearing minefields or fighting with the infantry.

Dugouts helped against enemy artillery fire and the cold, but we didn't stay put very long to enjoy them.

The 504th moves toward Cheneux where they inflicted the first German defeat in the Battle of the Bulge and gained another Presidential unit citation to be added to the long list already held by 82nd Units.

BULGE—LAST STAGES

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE was in its last stages and the Allied High Command could now use its superiority in men and material to drive the beaten remnants of Von Rundstedt's Army into the Siegfried Line and, by constantly applying pressure, prevent the reorganization and consolidation necessary within the shelter of that formidable barrier. The 82nd Airborne Division was ordered from VII Corps reserve where it had reorganized, re-equipped, and conducted intensive training, to attack northeast through the 7th Armored Division from the vicinity of Born, Wallerode, Montenau, and St. Vith with the mission of piercing the Siegfried Line.

One of the ETO's finest combat divisions, the 1st Infantry Division, was on the 82nd's left flank and was to attack abreast of the Airborne. The jump-off came at 0600 hours with the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment on the left, (North) and the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment on the right (South). The 505th and 508th Parachute Infantry Regiments were in reserve.

The Division's zone of attack was through a 10 mile long, thickly wooded mountainous area. There were highways on both sides of the area, northeast of St. Vith, but the only roads through the area were snow clogged trails running laterally across the Division zone of attack and these were in the hands of the enemy. Progress of the attack was hindered by waist-deep snow, intense cold, and well organized and concealed enemy positions.

Such difficult and unusual conditions called for unique tactics and the attack was made by each Regiment in a column of files. The lead man would buck the deep drifts, breaking a trail until exhausted, then be relieved by the next man. This attack was one of the most arduous in the Division's history and, at its end in the Siegfried Line, probably the most bitterly fought, but the troopers kept driving to once again enter Germany. Only the unceasing efforts of the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion enabled the supplies to keep up with the troopers in the almost impenetrable thickets.

By 2030 hours the 325th having attacked south from the line Born-Ambleve road, past Medell and then east and north of Meyerode, was on the high ground west of, and overlooking Wereth. The 504th meanwhile had advanced 7000 yards capturing Herresbach killing 65, capturing 201 Krauts while suffering no casualties. The inevitable counterattack that followed was broken up as were two more later that day. That night, like on many other occasions hot chow did not arrive and the men, bone-weary and chilled, ate cold K rations.

Next day the Division advanced over 2000 yards with the 325th attacking north at 0330 hours and seizing Wereth and the high ground east of the town. At 0400 hours the 508th attacked thru the 504th and by dusk had captured Holzheim and Medendorf. The 505th at 0500 hours passed through the 325th to the high ground 1500 yards southwest of Honsfeld, dug in, and patrolled vigorously to the north and east where it maintained contact with the 1st Division.

During this time there occurred an incident only possible in snow warfare. Eighty prisoners had been collected in the western part of Holzheim when four English-speaking "paratroopers" approached and fooled guards by their "snow suit" attire. The "paratroopers" had armed the prisoners with abandoned weapons and were plotting a counterattack when 1st Sgt. Funk of the 508th stepped into the picture.

A German officer shoved the muzzle of his machine pistol in Funk's ribs, demanding surrender. The sergeant's sub-machine gun was slung, barrel up, on his shoulder. Taking a backward step and a 1000-to-1 chance, Funk shouted, "Surrender, hell!" catching his tommygun by the trigger in mid-air and ripping the German with a 20-round clip.

The 82nd hit the Siegfried Line Jan. 31 1945 with the 325 and 504th drawing the job of cracking it three days later. The attack was successful and the Division objectives, Udenbreth, Neuhof, and Hertesrott Heights were taken by nightfall of February 2 only after severe fighting, and held despite extremely heavy counterattacks by tank supported infantry. The seizure of Udenbreth placed the First United States Army in a position to attack down ridge lines all the way to Bonn.

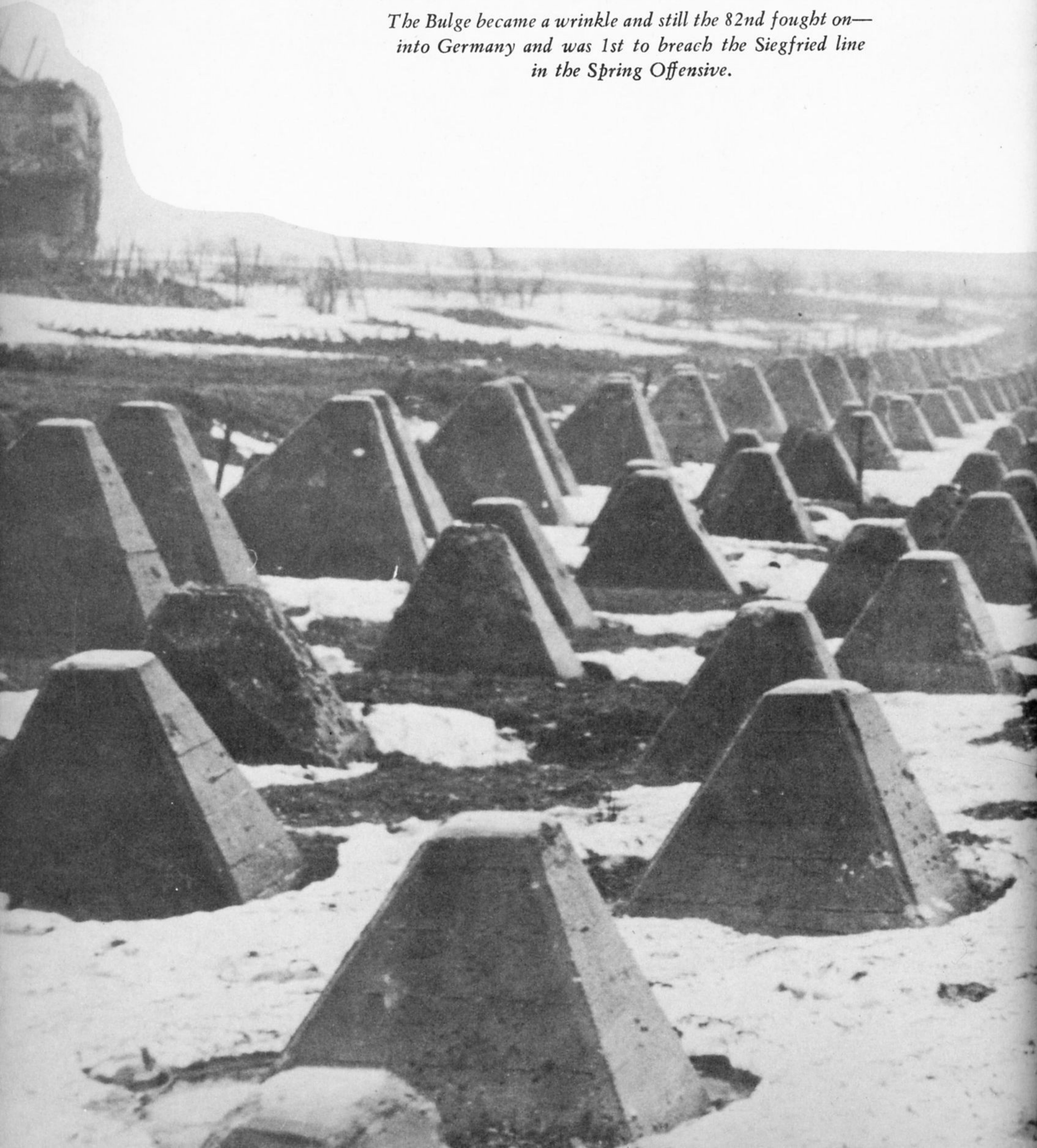
During the attack, where courage was the keynote, men like Lt. Warren R. Williams Jr. of the 325th stood out. This officer, although wounded several times, refused to be evacuated and led his men through the murderous crossfire of machine guns and small arms from supporting concrete pillboxes.

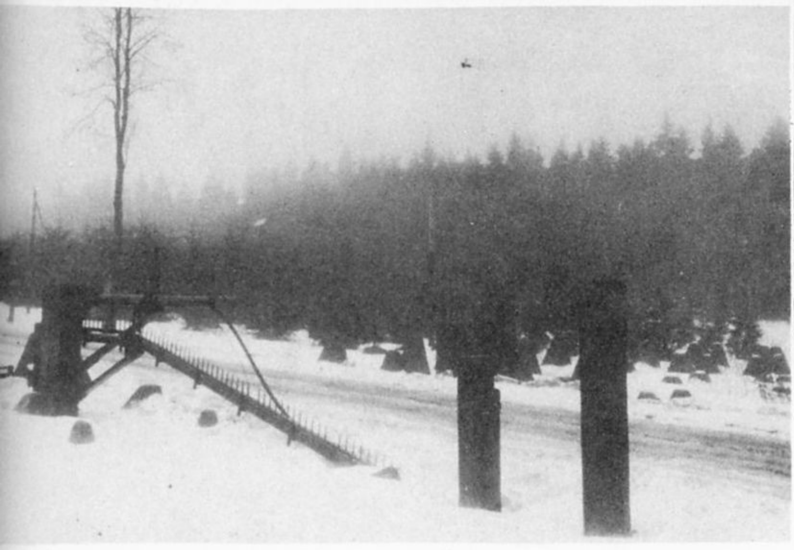
On February 3rd, the Division strengthened and consolidated its defensive position, repulsing strong counterattacks with heavy losses to the enemy. That night the 99th Infantry Division started to relieve front line units of the 82nd. The relief was completed by February 6 and the Division moved to the Vielsalm area where it reorganized, refitted, and prepared to move to Rott, Germany.

From here the Division plus the 517th Regimental Combat Team, moved to the Hurtgen sector where, as a member of XVIII Corps (Airborne) and later III Corps, it participated in the advance to the Roer River. Except for extensive minefields, extremely difficult road conditions and hostile artillery fire, the operation was not too difficult. The Division arrived on the Roer River and had completed detailed plans for a river crossing and the seizure of Nideggen east of the river when it was withdrawn on February 17 and returned to the Sissone-Suippes, area, France.

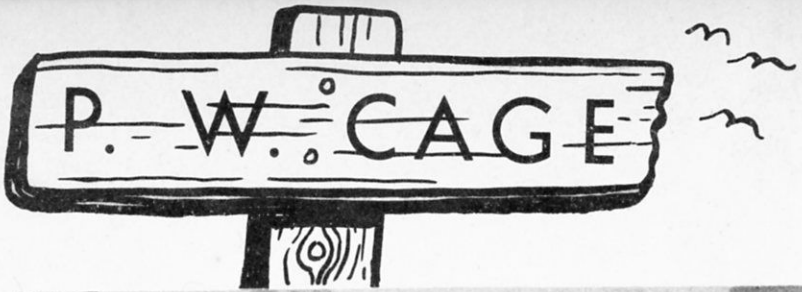
THE SIEGFRIED LINE

The Bulge became a wrinkle and still the 82nd fought on—into Germany and was 1st to breach the Siegfried line in the Spring Offensive.

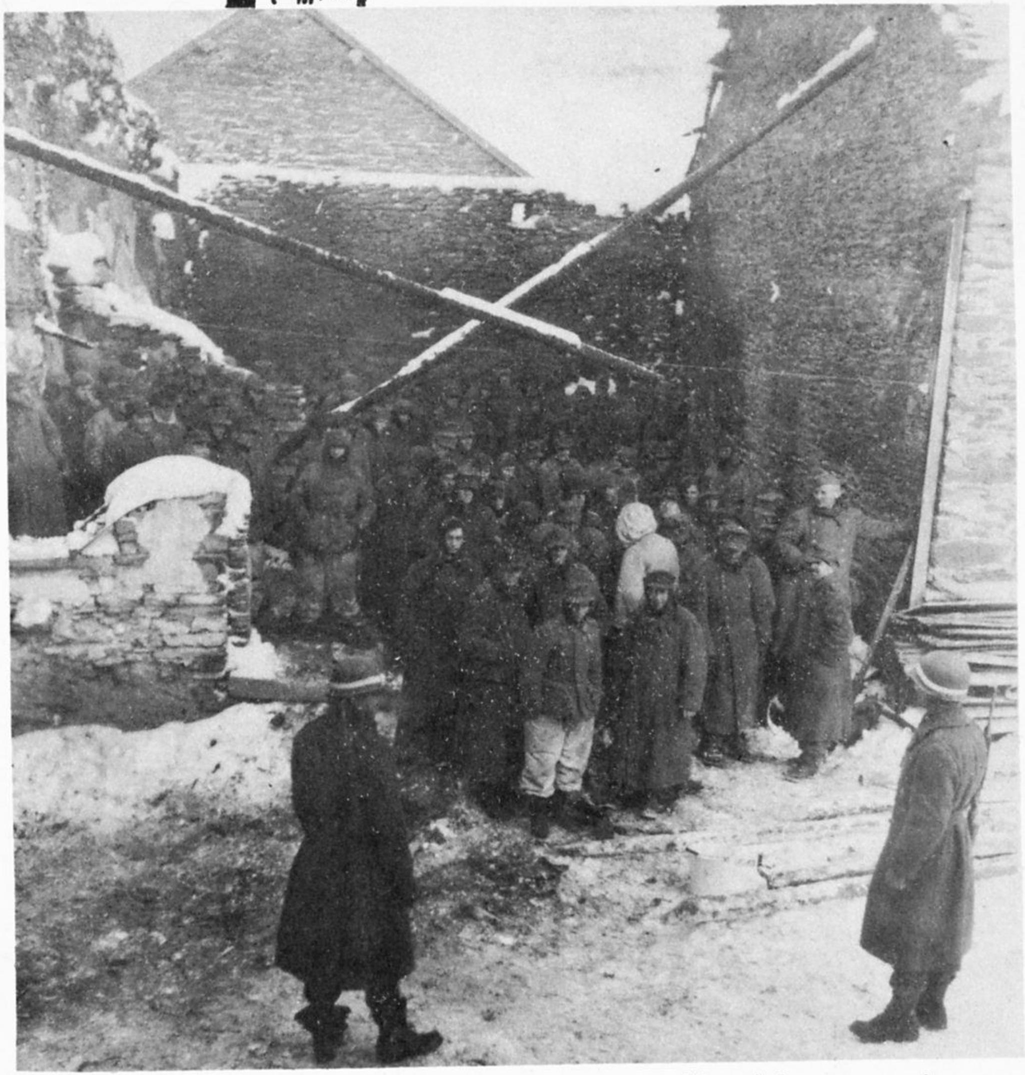




DANGER
ROAD BEYOND
POINT

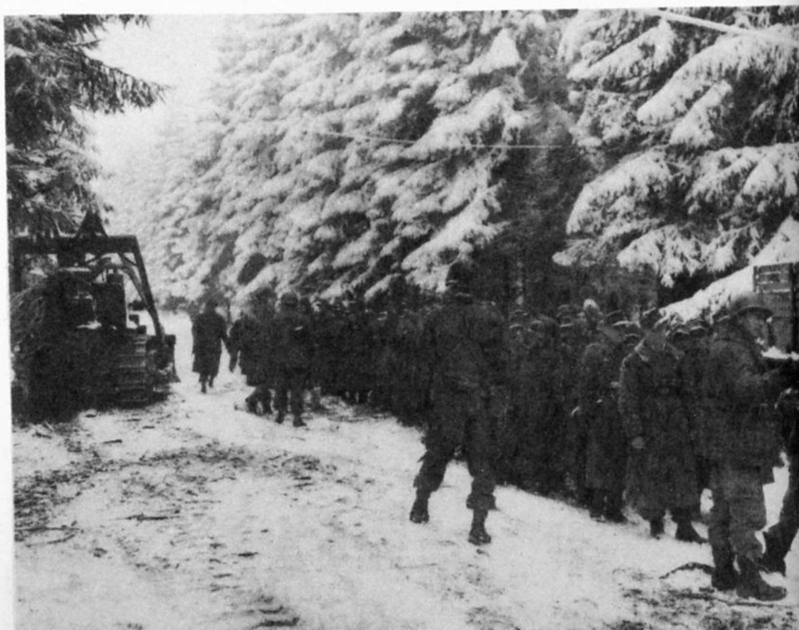


P. W. CAGE



Several hundred bewildered supermen were just as cold as their captors and secretly glad that for them, at least, the war was over—Herresbach.

In Hierlot as elsewhere hundreds surrendered in body if not belief.



During 2 years of fighting the 82nd with a combat strength usually under 10,000 took a total of nearly 200,000 Axis prisoners, yet there always seemed to be more over the next hill.

A retreating German always carried a lot of equipment.

We kept them inside when buildings were available.

Any house might contain more Germans to fight, die or surrender.

ROUTE B
NOT MARKED
BEYOND THIS POI

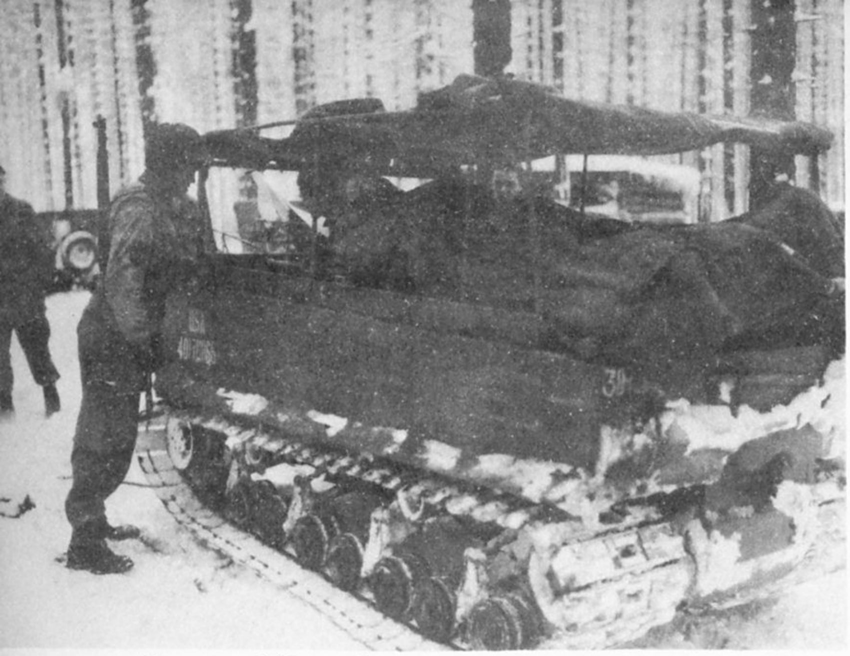
WRECKAGE

FROM WERBOMONT TO SCHMIDT

EVACUATION

With every battle comes the tragedy of those who must leave their homes with no place to go.

AFTERMATH

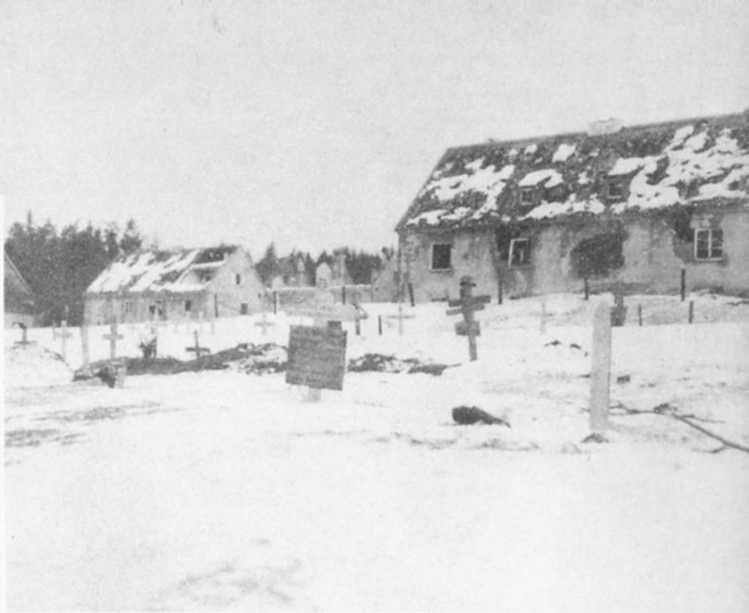


The weasel (Snow Buggy) came into its own in the Bulge—evacuating wounded.

Dead Germans piled up near Holzheim.

A stolen American jeep was never returned by its German driver.

German graves on the Belgian German border near Losheimergraben, Germany.

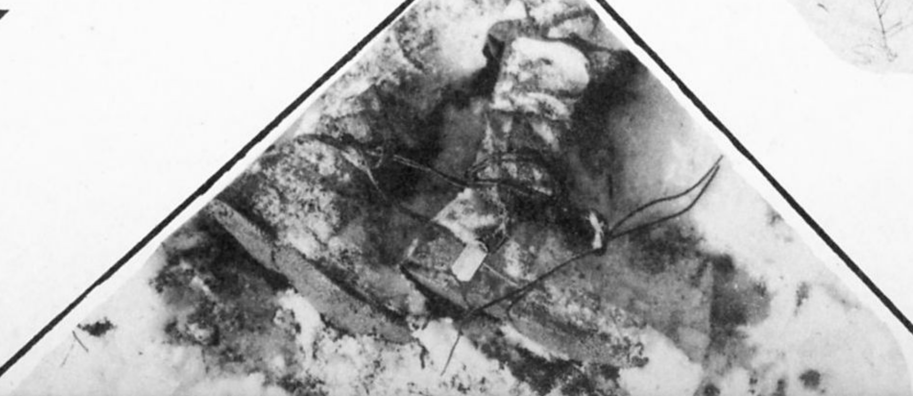


ACHTUNG STRASSE
UNTER ARTILLERIEBESCHUSS

(Left) Signs of the times.

Crossroads at Malmedy

One of the tragic crimes of the war was the Malmedy crossroads incident where American soldiers were crowded into a field by their German captors and cold bloodly butchered by machine gun fire.

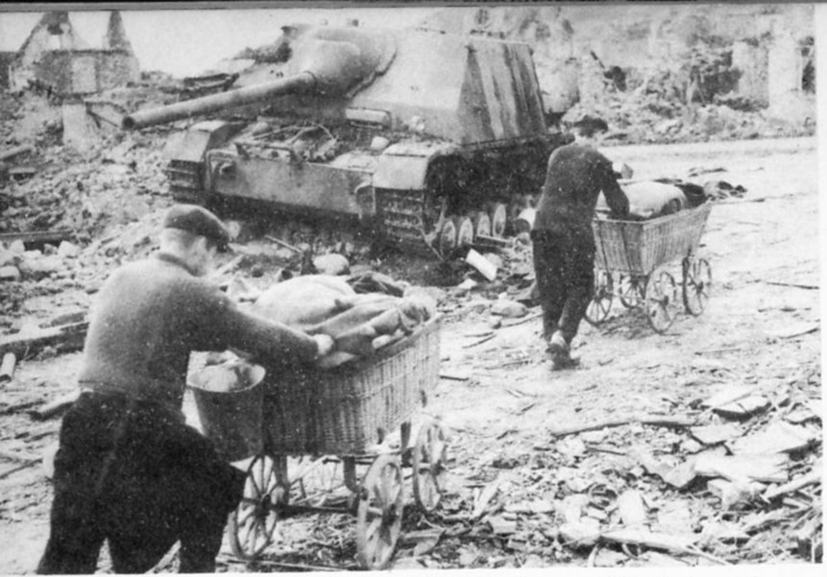


Germ

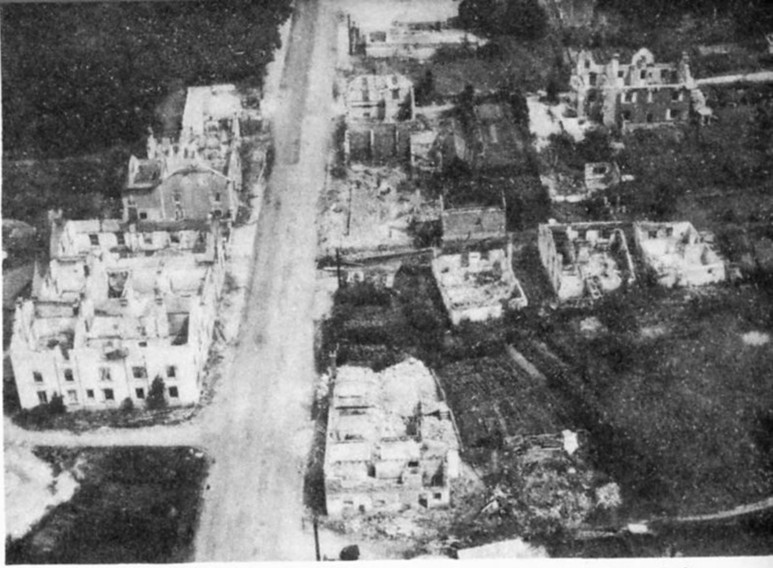
"It is not the neutrals
or the lukewarms who
make history"

ADOLPH HITLER (1933)

any



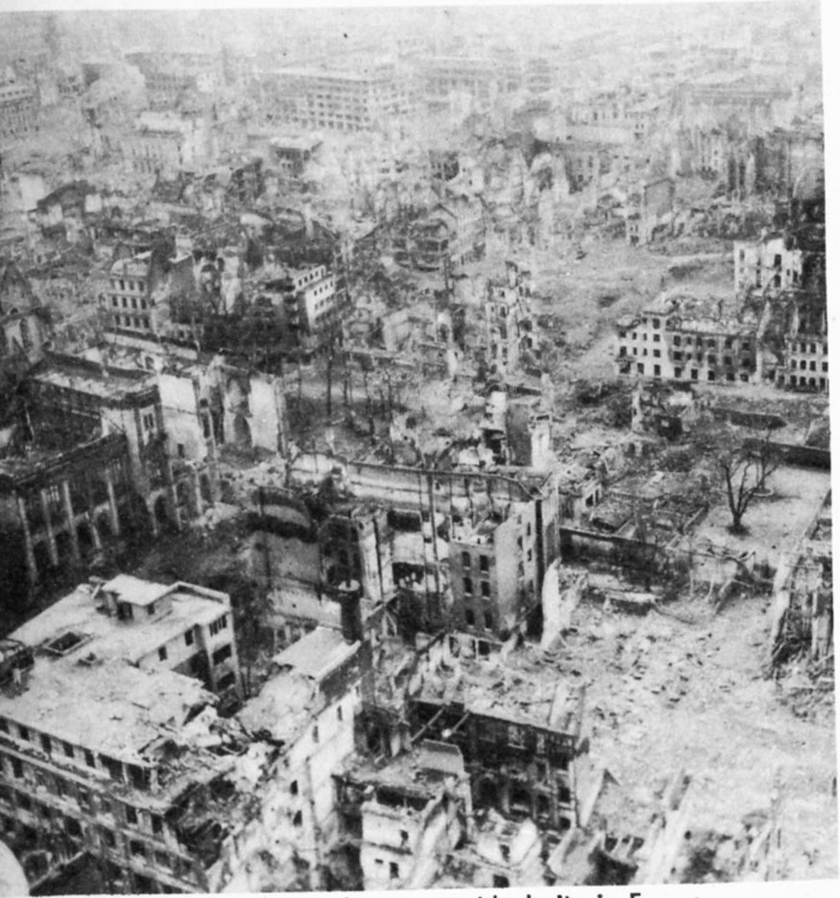
German civilians push on with the salvage of their burned out homes.



Weiden—Here the 82nd Division aided in the reduction of the Ruhr Sack.

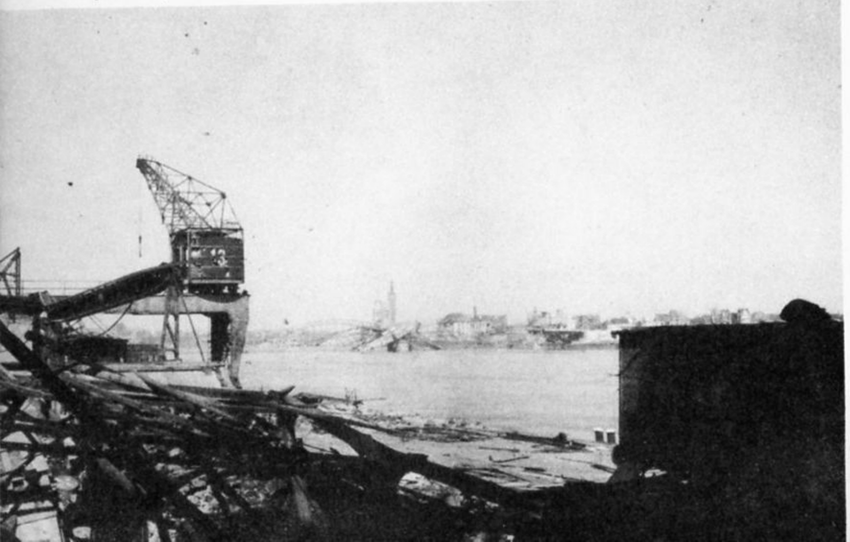
Cologne

Cologne was completely raised but the war had died down a bit and the mixed role of static defense and occupation was new to the 82nd. Almost 400 yards of river separated our boys from the Germans across the Rhine. It was a feeling of security the 82nd had known in no previous campaign. Daily artillery and mortar barrages were exchanged, keen eyed outposts snipped at anything that moved across the river and patrols crossed each night but otherwise the situation was quite pleasant. Between stints on outpost guard along the river, the troopers patrolled the city of Cologne routing out hidden 5th columnists and spies, watched the civilians, and enforced the curfew. During their spare time Airborne ingenuity came forth as the troopers entertained themselves in a thousand

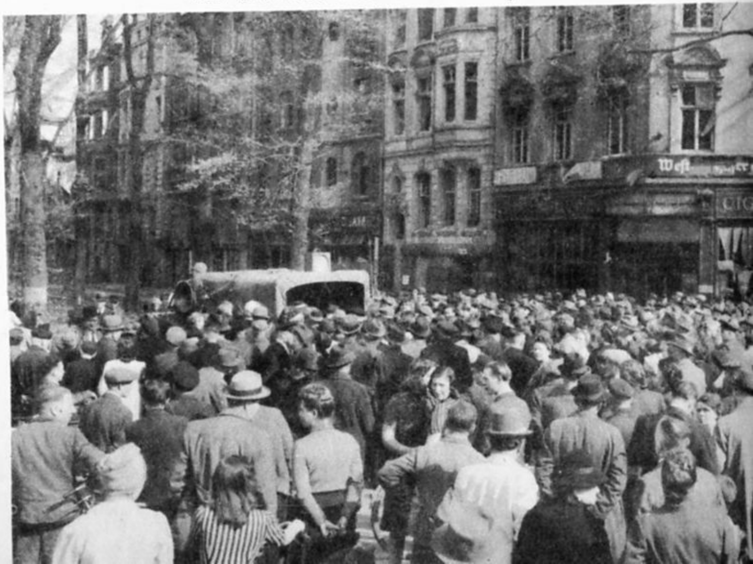


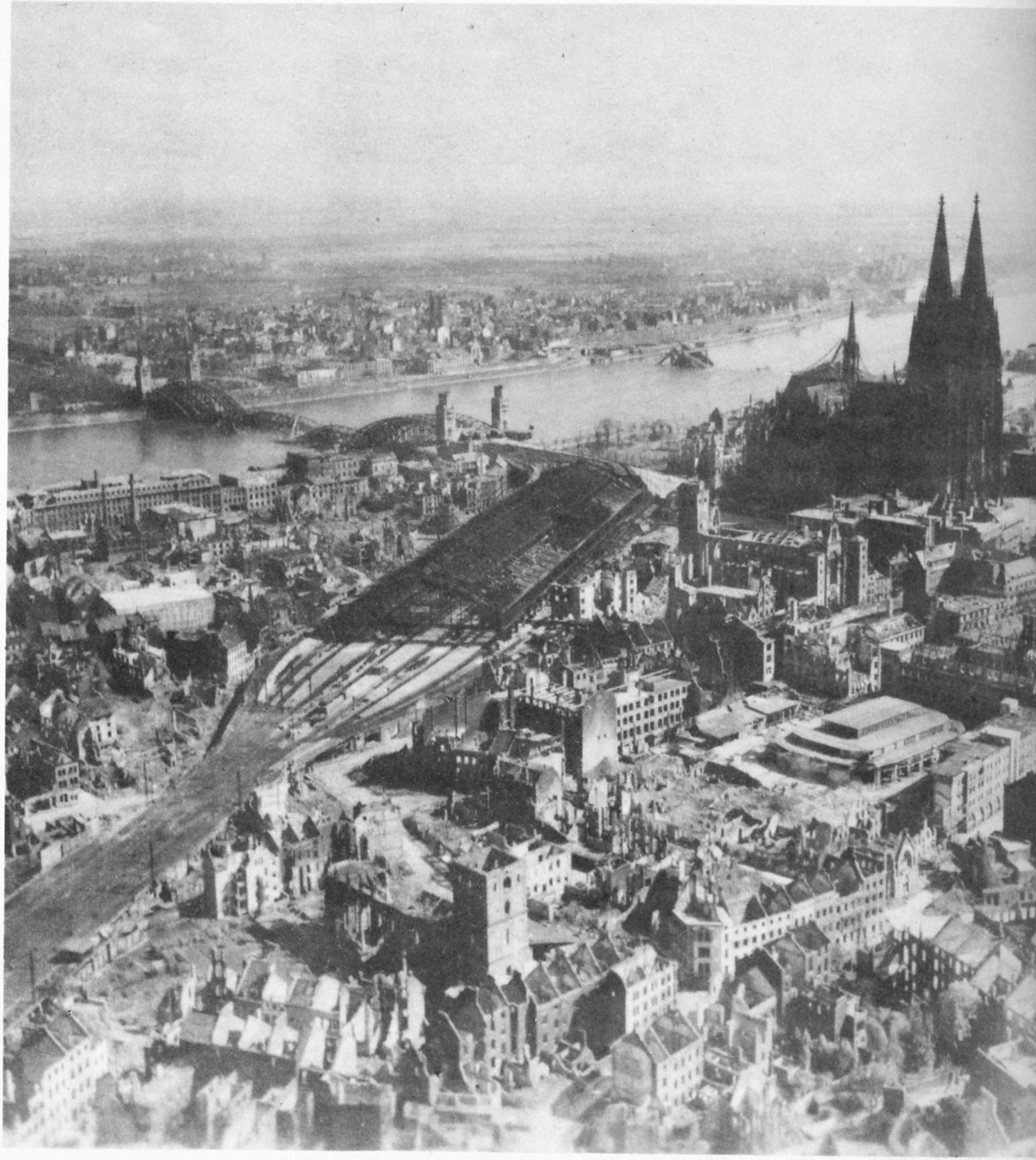
(Above) Cologne — The most ravished city in Europe.

(Below) Germans still held the east bank of the Rhine.

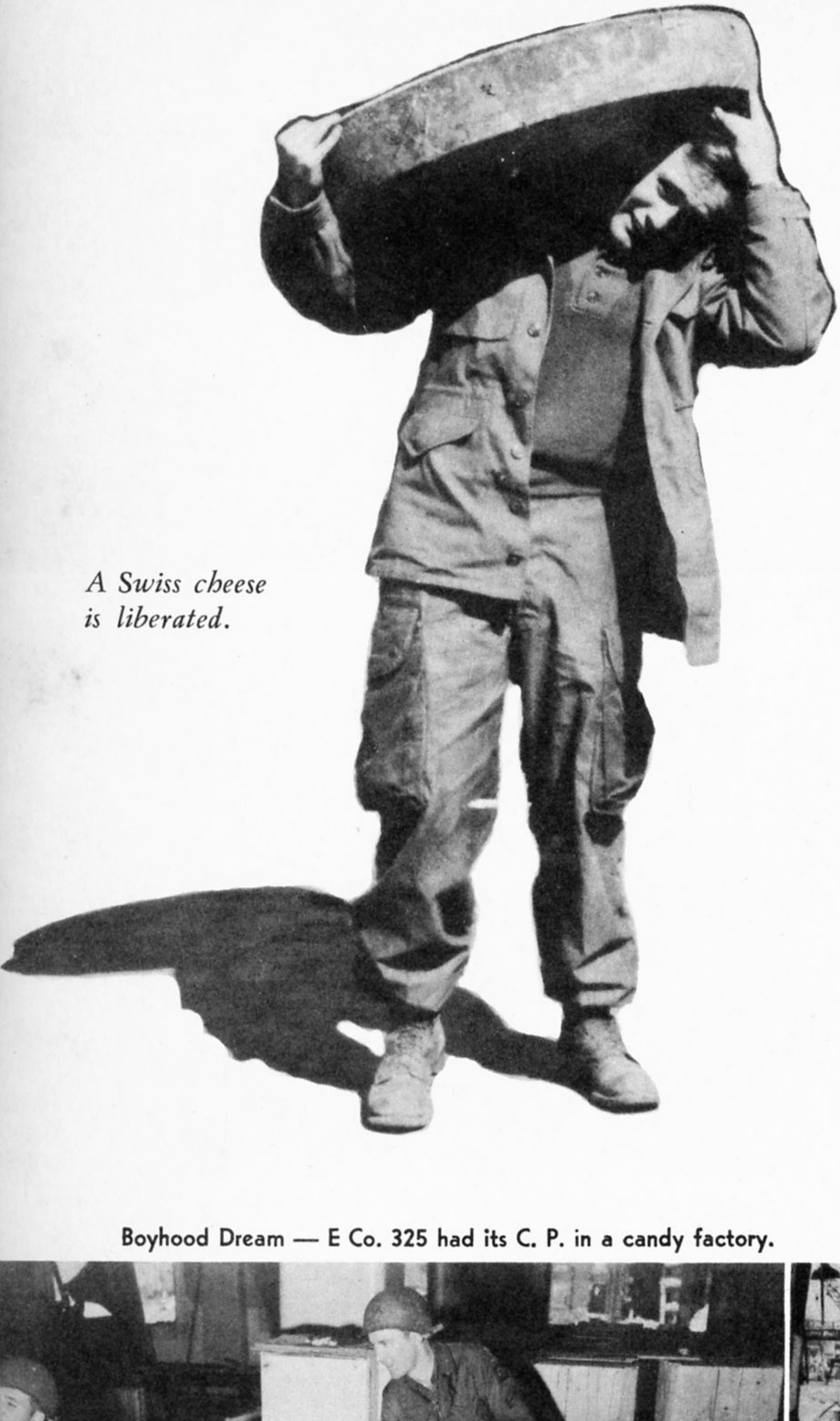


Military Government broadcasts the news — pure and unadulterate for the first time in twelve years.





Only the magnificence of the Cologne Cathedral stood out above a landscape of bombed buildings, blown bridges and roofless rubble.



A Swiss cheese is liberated.

different, yet very simple ways, orchestra, sightseeing, fixing abandoned motorcycles; a touch of beer, Rhine wine or Dago red, One Company E, of the 325, even had a whole building to live in, and to make things even more of a boyhood dream, the building was Germany's largest candy factory.

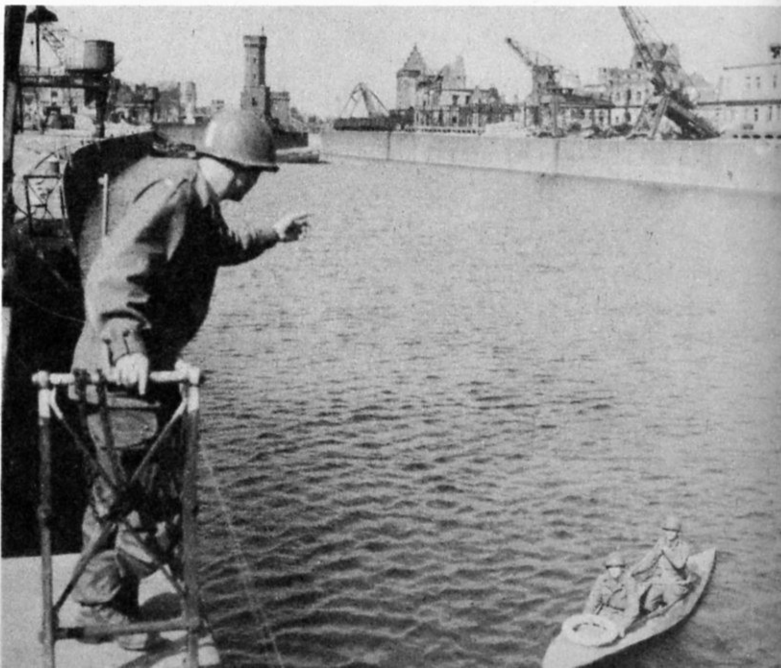
But the war along the Rhine would not always be so quiet. Across the river was a German army still very much alive and actively engaging American soldiers where-ever met around the perimeter of their circular defense known as the Ruhr Sack. The barrier on our side of the Sack was the Rhine river. We were ordered to cross in a diversionary attack that proved to be one of the bloodiest small scale engagements of the war.

At 0200, April 6th, the assault wave of "A" Company of the battle hardened 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment 82nd Airborne Division crossed the Rhine river above Cologne. No sooner had the boats hit the eastern shore than all Hell broke loose. Machine gun and burp pistol fire criss-crossed the beach. These positions were immediately outflanked and destroyed. By 0400 the entire company plus their attached machine gunners and demolition crew were across.

At dawn they were in the river town of Hitdorf, Germany where they flushed 68 surprised Jerries out of their sacks. Terrified

Boyhood Dream — E Co. 325 had its C. P. in a candy factory.

Cyacking on the Rhine with Krauts on the east bank.



One platoon had its own orchestra
with bikes and morter bikes to patrol on.

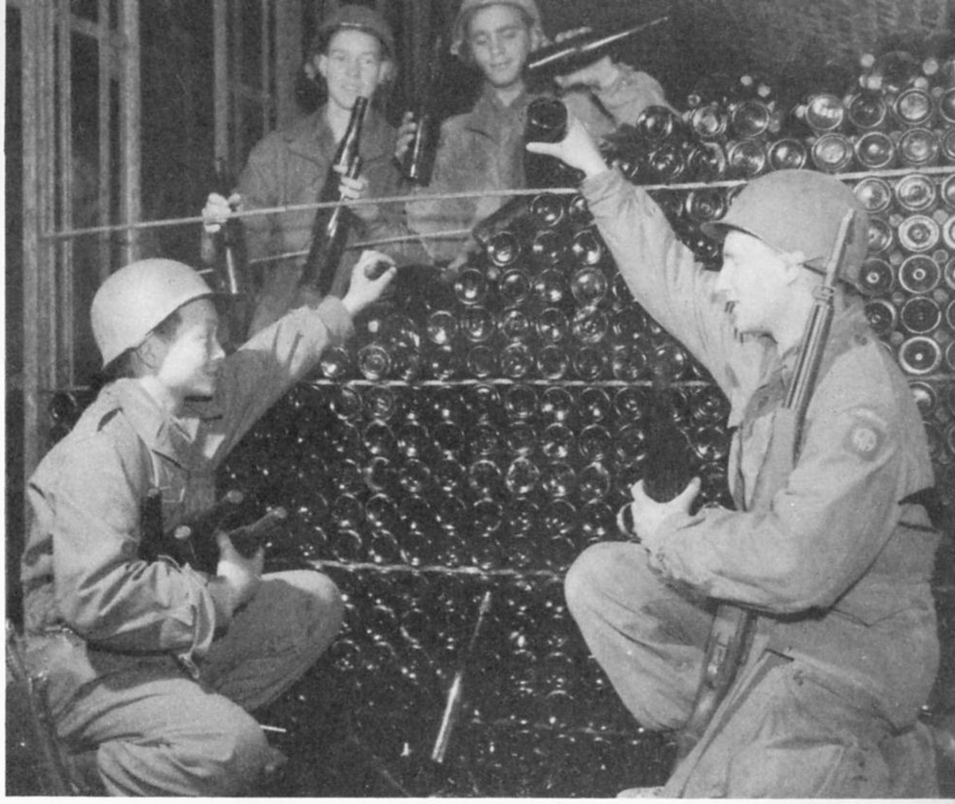
civilians hid in their basements, and when brought out, expressed surprise when they weren't raped or tortured.

The only organized enemy resistance was in a factory in the north end of the town. The first platoon drove out a company of Jerries in the morning.

Then the troopers settled down to enjoy the scenery and the sunny weather. The birds were whistling in the trees, but at 1200 another familiar whistle sobered the atmosphere. 77's, 88's, 149's and everything in the book came roaring into the town. A Co. veterans gripped their rifle butts and waited for the enemy infantry. A company of Jerries charged the third platoon with fixed bayonets. During the fire fight that followed, Sergeant William Consigny moved forward on the left flank with his machine gun squad and cut down 17 Germans. Meanwhile Sergeant Raymond J. Donavan moved out on the other flank with several men, capturing 33. The remaining Jerries took to their heels.

The second platoon in the other end of town met the same kind of an attack and turned it into a riot. "Those first Krauts were just 'mine-run' troops," remarked Technical Sergeant John H. Stubbs, "but I never want to see again the skirmish line that moved in on us at 1800; they came in wave after wave, as far as the eye could see. Big six-foot Jerries (later identified as the Third Paradivision men) their bayonets flashing in the evening sun. Our machine guns killed beaucoup and pinned down the rest to our front, but they were coming in on both flanks so we withdrew to better positions."

Company Commander, Captain John N. Pease, continued saying, "The situation became critical at 1900. The second and third



One outpost was over a wine cellar where the Germans had stored enough stolen French wine to feed an army.

McGUIRE
&
POPP'S
RENDEZVOUS

McGuire and Pop tended bar at their own tavern in Weiden.

This patrol captured a coup of carrier pigeons—they were tough but delicious.

After Hittdorf the Sack Collapsed

A Lieutenant surrenders.

platoon positions were overrun by Tiger tanks and infantry, and we lost all communications with them."

Sergeant Harry N. Smith, a first battalion headquarters company machine gunner — one of the few survivors of this section related, "At dusk we heard tanks rumbling towards our road block and the biggest thing I've ever seen on tracks roared at us. Our gun position was in a strongly built basement of a stone house so we felt pretty safe; at 50 yards we opened up on its open hatch and vision slits. The bullets bounced off the sides like they were ping-pong balls. We gave a couple of sweeps at the infantry behind and after the tank blew down our house, we shagged back towards our main line of resistance. Our section chief picked us up; we fought our way a couple blocks towards the command post, but decided to take over a house and fortify it. How we got that far is more than I can understand. We escaped a-half dozen ambushes and killed at least 20 Jerries. By this time we had gathered another 10 of our boys and for the next three hours we really gave it to them."

Staff Sergeant William Bullock took off from the command post to try to contact cut off elements. "Little groups of soldiers were walking all over town. I stepped over at least 50 dead men — only two were GI's. I came to a mangled pile of torn up Jerry corpses and as I was stepping over them I heard a cool voice ask, 'Is that a GI?' Two demolition men in the second story of a house had been up there since dark, letting small groups pass and dropping gamon grenades on every large bunch of Krauts that came within their range. We pulled back to the command post."

At 2130 the Regimental Commander told Captain Pease over the field telephone to collect the men that were left and to go back to the boats. Patrols moved all through the Kraut infested areas looking for A Company's second and third platoons, but they found only a few of their men. At 2230 A Co. called the Colonel to report a Tiger tank 25 feet from their basement command post; he told them to hang on for another hour that "I" Company was coming over to help them fight their way back to the beach. Pfc. MacNamara climbed up on the roof and dropped a gamon grenade on the Tiger. It bounced off the side killing 7 Jerry infantrymen standing alongside. Pfc. Hill knocked the track off, but the tankers stayed with their machine, shooting their machine guns and cannon at everything they heard. By this time the 82nd men were so low on ammunition that they were told to hold their fire except for necessity. Germans filtered through all our positions, walking boldly past our hidden boys who followed them with their rifle sights and cussed because they had to pass up such choice targets.

Paul W. Maas, the Company's German translator, overheard a German officer giving commands to work a large German force in on our beach and cut us off completely. Private Maurice Bledsoe took off for the beach with his machine gun and several riflemen. There, he held his fire until they were almost in his lap. He mowed down more than a platoon of them, jerked his machine gun out before they could zero in on him, and set up again. The ground was covered with moaning and dying Jerries and Bledsoe raked them a couple of more times with machine gun fire. This discouraged further Jerry attempts in this direction.

By radio, "I" Company was picked up on the beach. Pfc. Francis Isemann, one of the two third platoon men that fought their way back to the command post, volunteered to go to the beach and guide "I" Company in. They really came in. "I" Company men swarmed all over the big tank in our yard; opening the hatch they killed all the Jerries inside.

"Spread out with their wounded in the middle, the two companies made a skirmish line and headed for the beach. The Germans had the beach pocketed by artillery fire, and some of our boats were damaged, but we used what was left," said First Sgt. Tesch.

35 came over with the command post group. Isolated groups of Americans left the town early in the morning, made the beach, and got across. Others came over under cover of the morning mist after sunup, until of the original 140, 70 made their way back.

98 German prisoners were captured. 60 were ferried across on the morning of the 6th. The remaining 38 were turned loose with instructions to give the Americans that might be captured alive, decent treatment.

Corporal Francis F. Phelps, a parachute medic, unarmed, surrendered when surrounded during the breakthrough at dusk. A German corporal shot him in the chest. The bullet glanced off a rib, Phelps dropped, played dead, and afterwards crept down to the beach where he was evacuated. His wound was reported as slight.

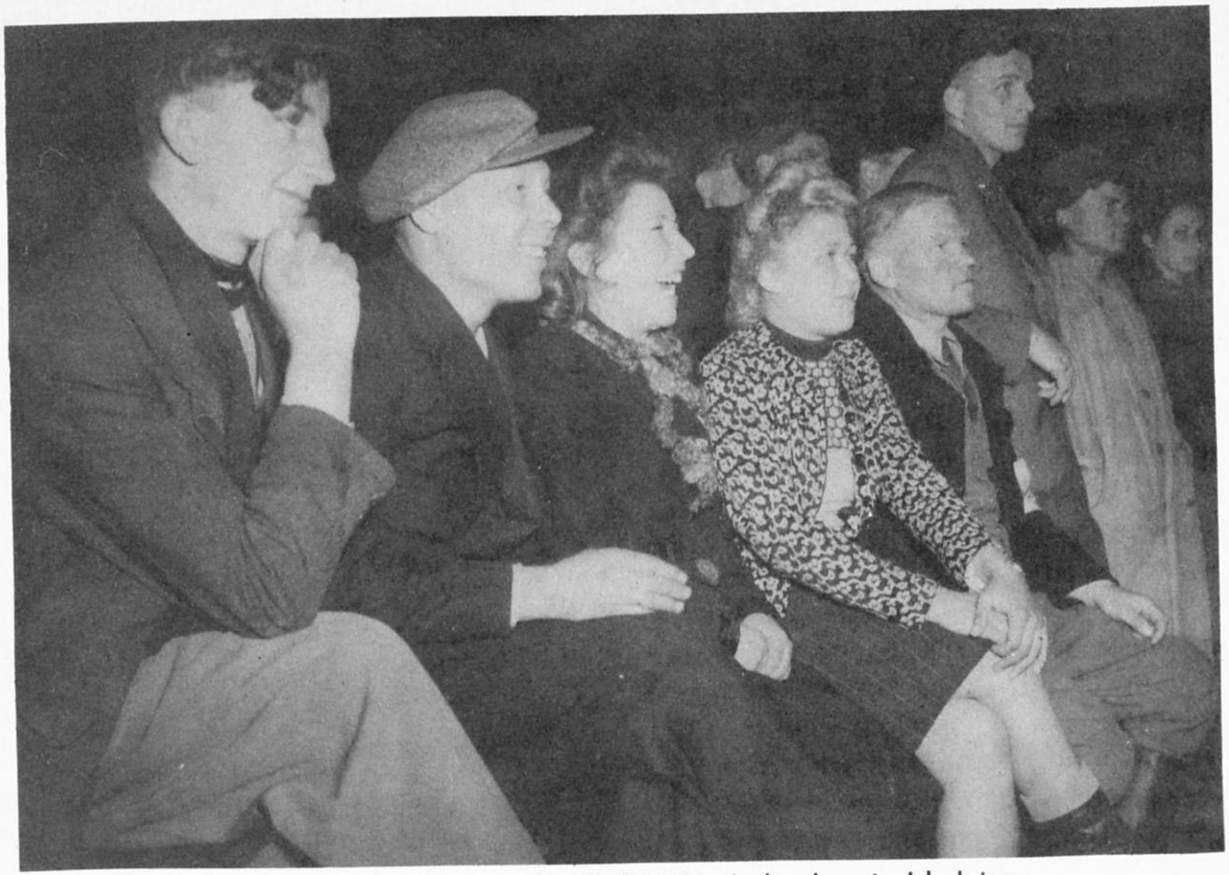
Private Alexander Mikita reached the beach after the last boat had left. Peeling off his clothes he swam back, being carried down stream 6 miles before he reached the other side.

"A" Company felt disgraced, being the first men in their regiment ever to retreat before an enemy force. However, they were known to have stopped and disorganized two battalions of German paratroops. With no effective antitank weapons they had held their positions and objective while Tiger tanks wandered all over the town. Captain Pease placed a conservative estimate of enemy dead at 200 with countless more wounded. The German high command in the "sack," fearing a full scale river crossing had the landing beach under artillery fire for the next forty-eight hours, and diverted the Third Paradivision with squadrons of heavy tanks from important "sack" fronts to line them on the river. Artillery observers reported lines of infantry digging along the river bank. A significant fact: American Forces drove 13 miles further into the other end of the weakened German lines on the following day.

Not only will it be recorded for posterity as one of the finest demonstrations of American fighting courage, it will also go down as a tactical success that shortened the battle of the "sack" by weeks.

Soon after Hitdorf, German resistance in the "sack" collapsed and the 82nd settled down to an occupation role with the new 15th Army, but the vacation was short lived. German resistance had been pushed to Northern and Southern Germany and we were called on to join our old friends of the British Second Army, fighting along the Elbe in Mecklenburg.

Kamerad — Alles Kaput!



Poles and Russians listen to the 82nd (508) swingband on 1 o'clock jump.

Papooshka guards her 1st orange.

82nd Men give big party for Russians and Poles they liberated in Germany

While covering the West side of the famed Ruhr "sack" 82nd men also had in their care thousands of Russian, Polish, French, Belgian, Dutch, Slavakian and Italian slave laborers liberated when Allied Armies overran Western Germany. Nearly ten million people had been enslaved and removed from their homes to do war work in Germany. This unprecedented forced migration of people was perhaps the greatest in Hitler's long list of crime against humanity.

Largest groups were the Ukranians and Poles, who have had to await conquest of Central Germany before they could be shipped home. Poorly-fed and cruelly

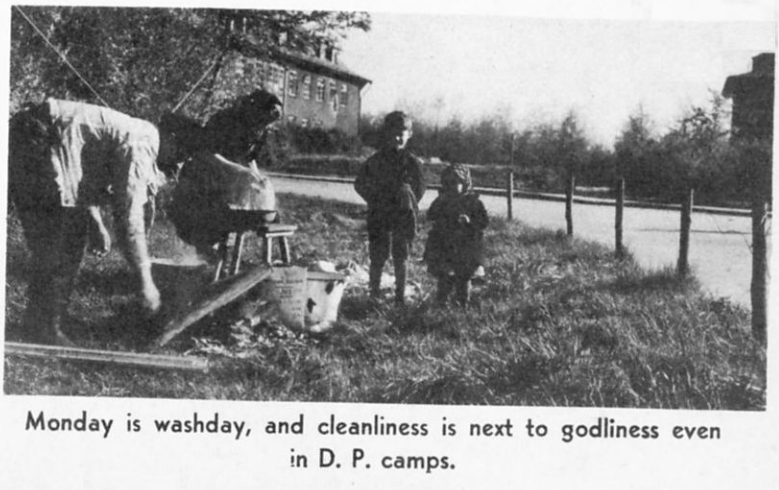
Polkas were popular — these slave laborers had been given no parties by the SS.

treated by their German captors, these people were overjoyed by the meager captured food supplies and limited accommodations which the Allies could provide.

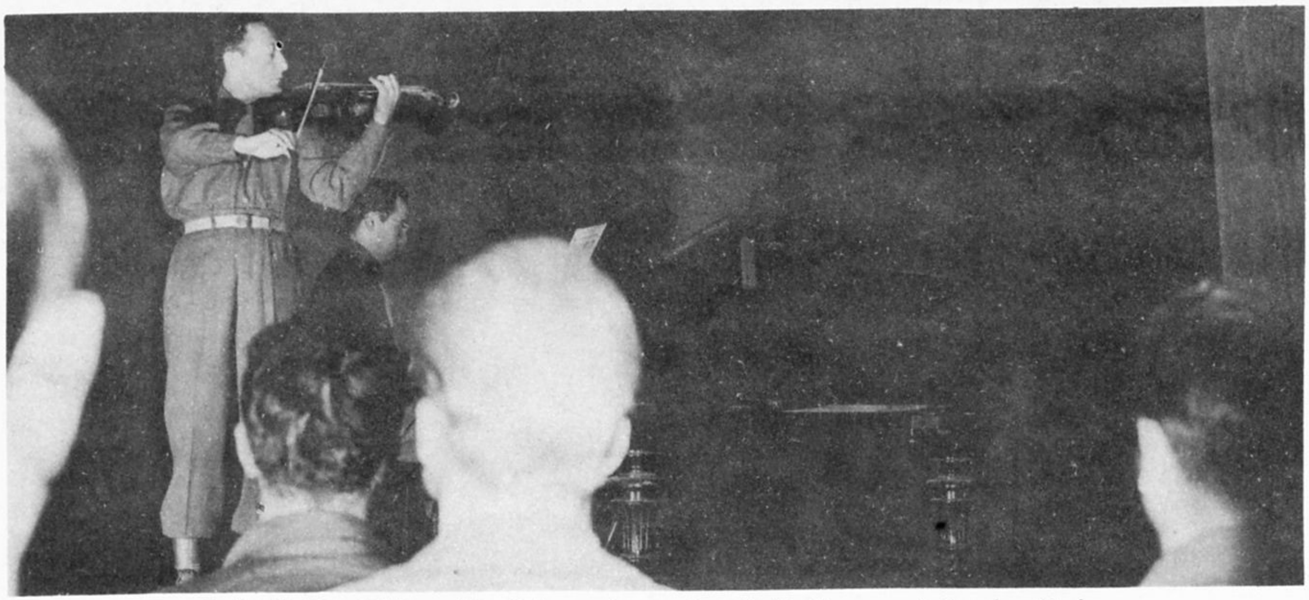
Russian reaction to the 82nd Swingband, however, was not quite so enthusiastic. Thousands showed up for the show at the Russian Displacement Center, but few seemed to understand the music. Each number was followed by loud applause, apparently out of courtesy, but it remained for the "Beer Barrel Polka" and the "Volga Boatman" to stir any visible emotion during the actual playing. The emotional spontaneity claimed by American Swing addicts was lacking, which might prove that in swing, as well as in classical music exposure and education are necessary for appreciation.

The following day 12 Russians put on a show of their own for the paratroopers.

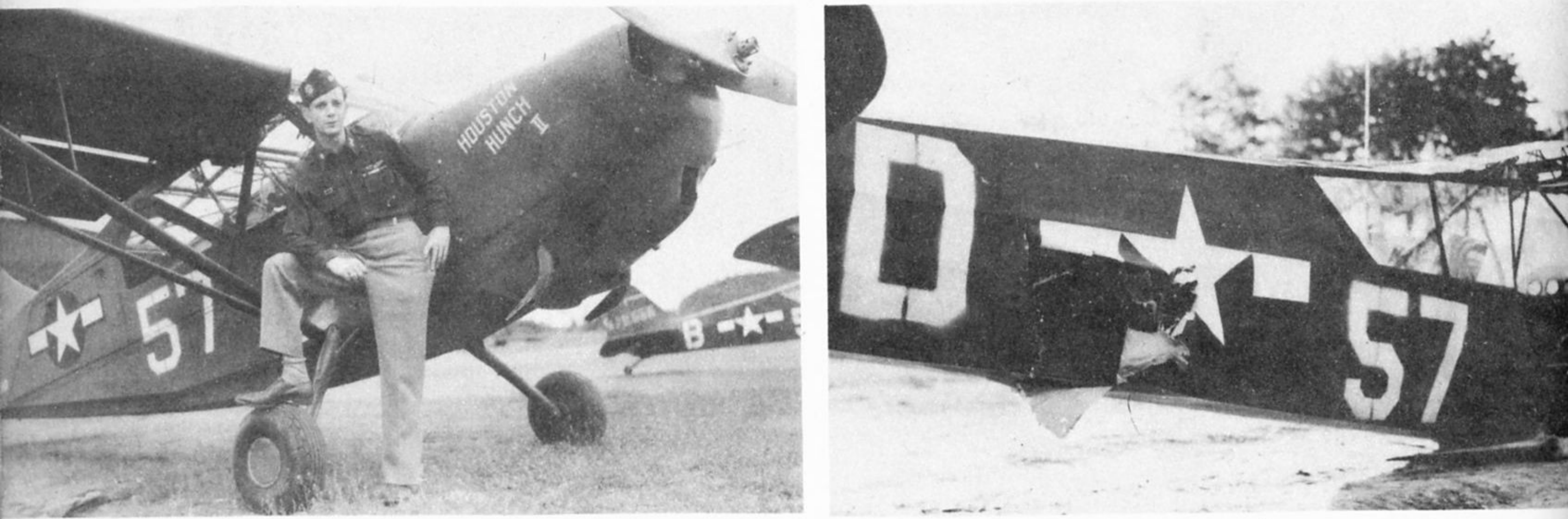
We are going home to the Ukraine, son.



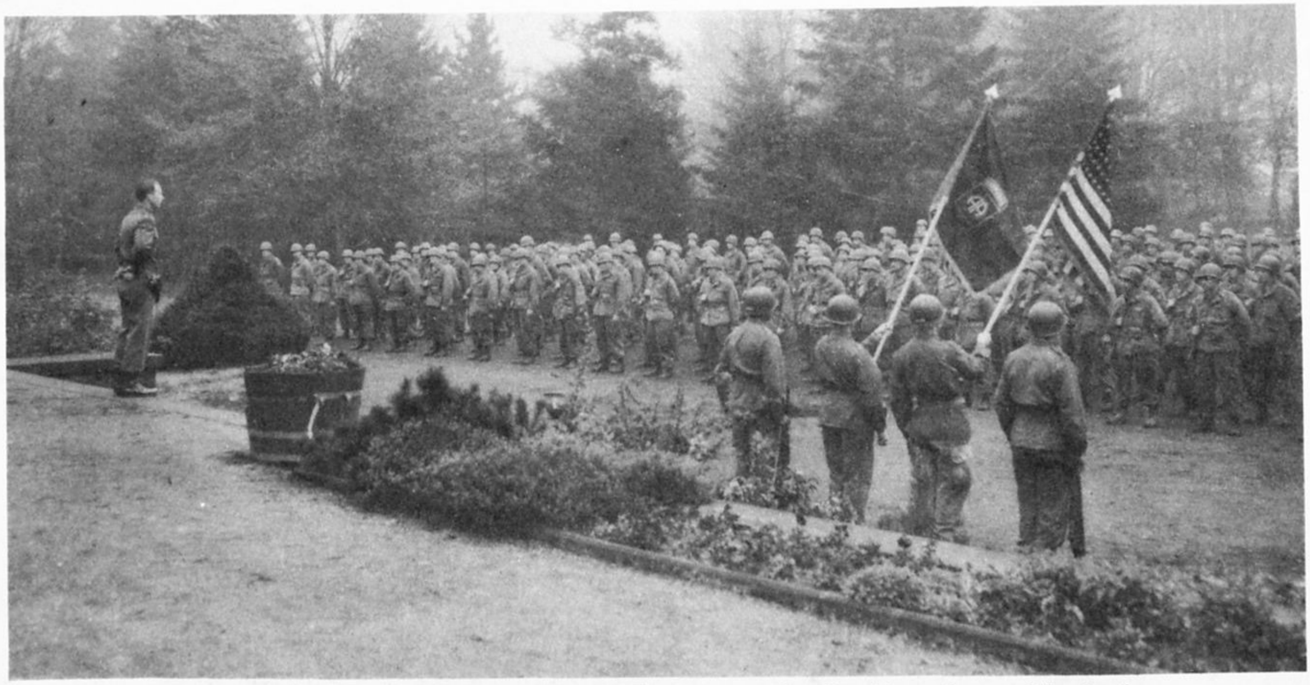
Monday is washday, and cleanliness is next to godliness even in D. P. camps.



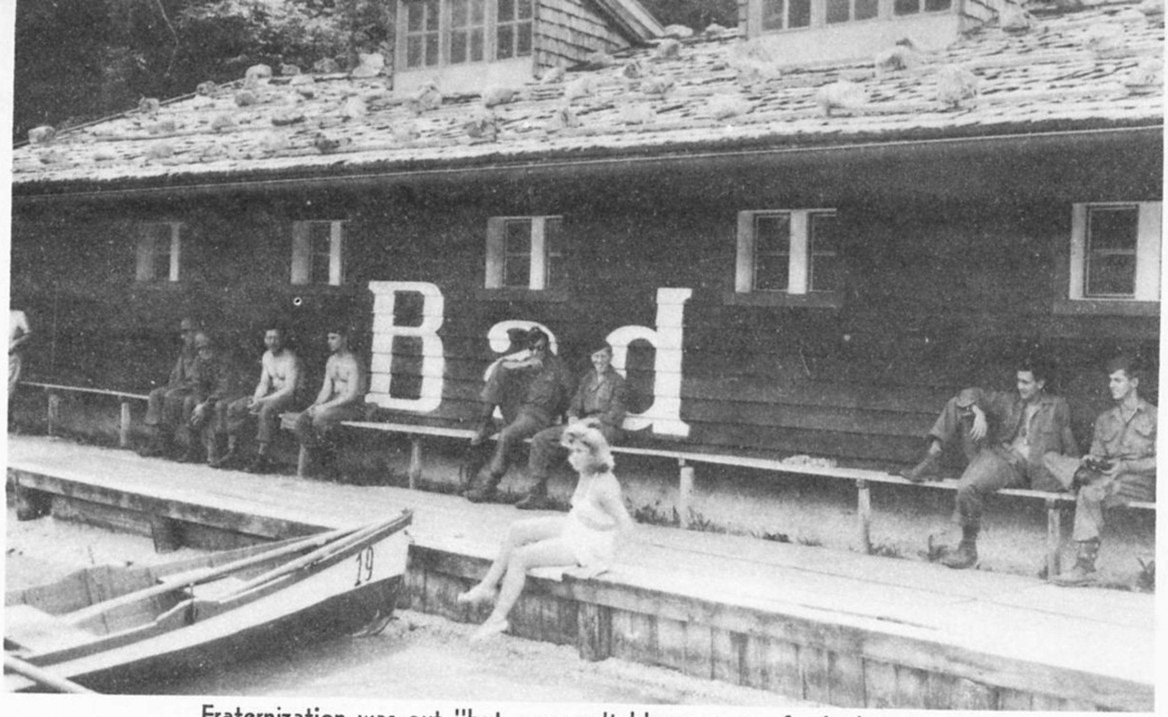
Josha Heifitz fiddles while Cologne burns at a U. S. O. concert for the 82nd.



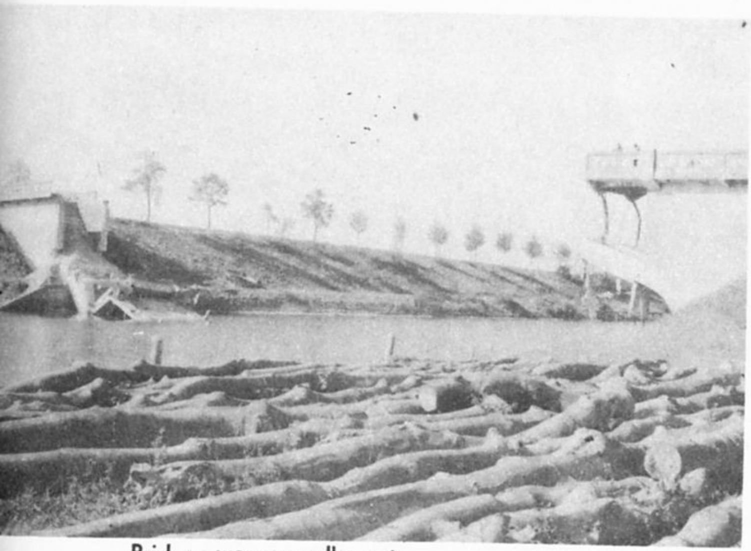
Always active 82nd Artillery Liaison pilots and their tiney cubs spent many hours over enemy lines.



General Gavin tells his troops the shocking news after President Roosevelt's death.



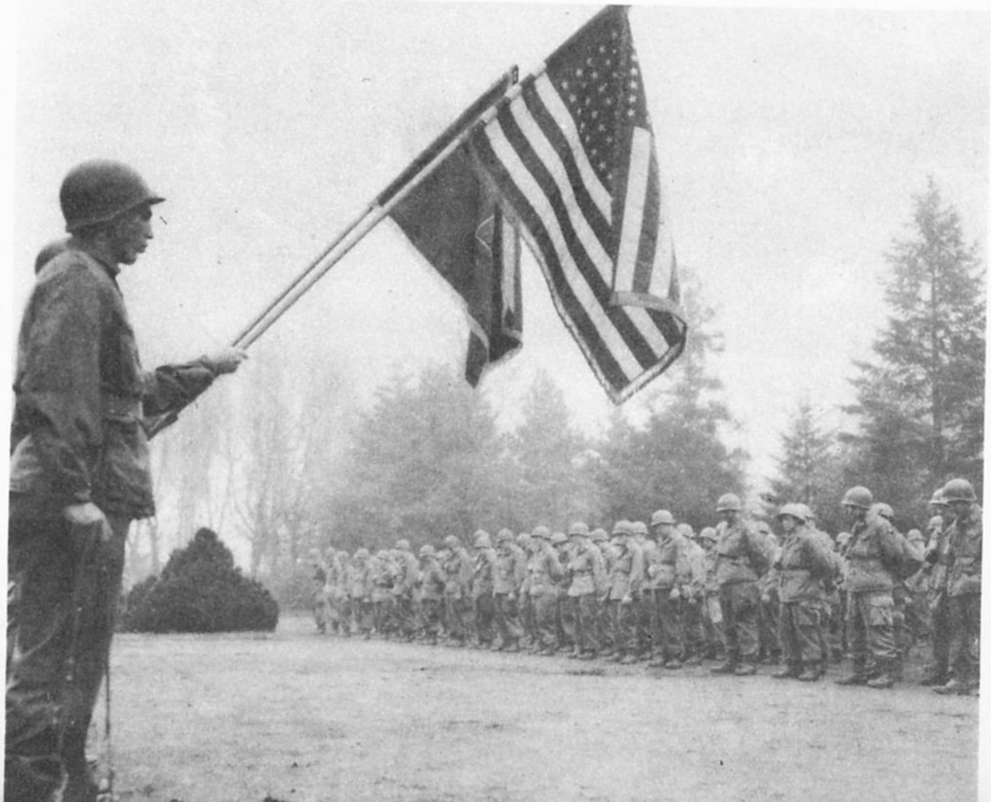
Fraternization was out "but you can't blame a guy for looking."

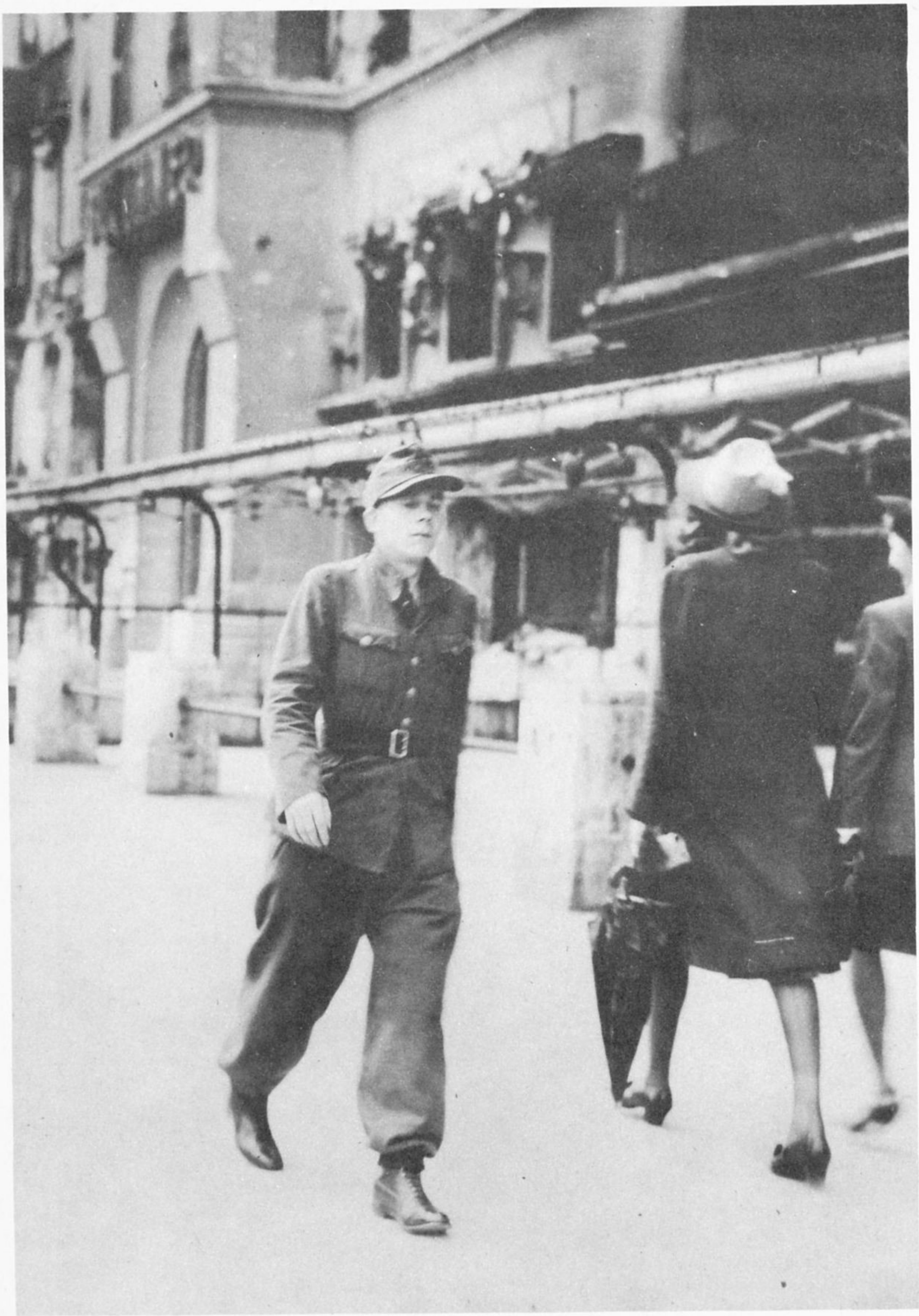


Bridges were usually out.

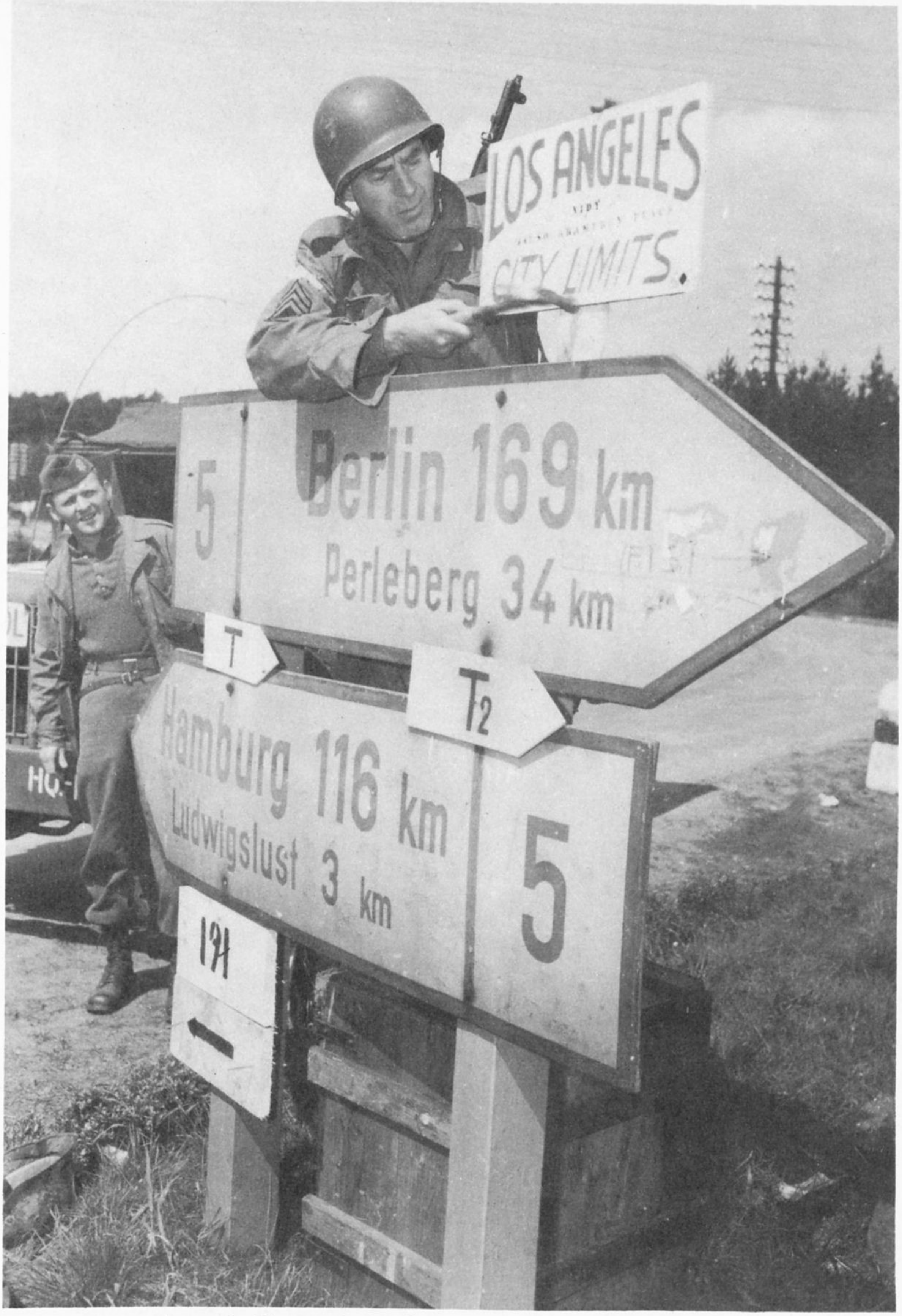
"You said it Brother."

Memorial Ceremony to President Roosevelt in Weiden, Germany.





The soldier without a country—Berlin, 1945.


LOS ANGELES
CITY LIMITS
5
Berlin 169 km
Perleberg 34 km
T
T2
Hamburg 116 km
Ludwigslust 3 km
5
171

Across the Elbe near Ludwigslust — war ends for the Eighty-second.

"Monty"

"The fame of this division will long shine in history and other generations besides our own will honour its deeds."

Montgomery of Alamein
Field Marshal
Commander-in-Chief
British Army of the Rhine

82nd troopers in British Buffalos cross the Elbe at Bleckede in the final campaign of the war.

Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery and Major Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway check the Elbe bridgehead. Said Ridgway, "The worst enemy artillery barrage since the Merderet in Normandy."

Above—The "Recons." were briefed for the initial crossing. They handled their own assault boats in the absence of Engineers. Our Regiments were still on their way from the Rhineland.

Central Europe

82nd ELBE BRIDGEHEAD LAST IN EUROPE

BLECKEDE, GERMANY — Bridgehead-Beachhead No. 11 for elements of the 82nd "All American" Airborne Division was made on April 30 when the 82nd crossed the Northern Elbe at Bleckede for the last bridgehead in the European War. It is befitting that the Skyborne Soldiers who made the last bridgehead assault were also in on the initial sock at Festung Fortress Europa two years before when they made the D-Day drop into Sicily July 9, 1943.

Making the initial assault was the 505th Parachute Combat Team which also made the initial jump into Sicily two years earlier. Within 24 hours the assault team had pushed 10,000 yards. The 504th and 325th Combat Teams moved through and with the aid of their old friends from Combat Command B of the 7th Armored and the 740th Tank Bn. pushed 52,000 yards by the second evening. Consolidating the huge arc, the Division busied itself taking German prisoners by the tens of thousands and waited for the oncoming Russians.

The following morning 82nd men (505) in British Buffalos were making the last bridgehead in Europe across the Elbe at Bleckede just as they had made the 1st in Sicily almost 2 years before.

British Long Toms and our own 75's paved the way as German railroad and coastal artillery guns let us have everything in a desperate last ditch defense.

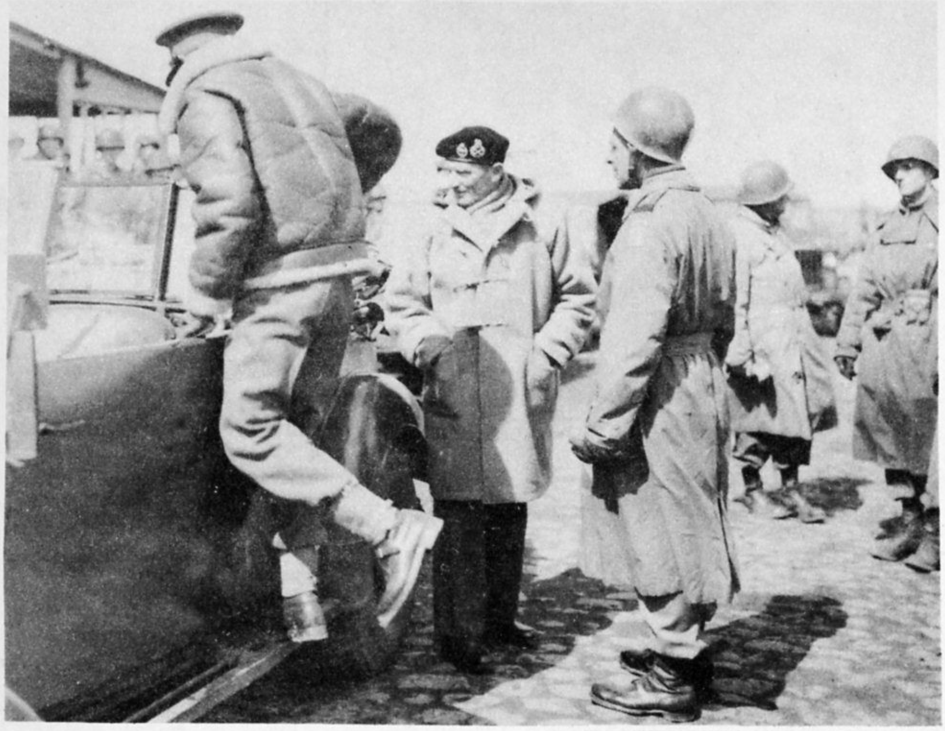
Engineers were shelled mercilessly as they built the pontoon bridge across the Elbe but they succeeded as always,

With typical Airborne aggressiveness the 82nd Airborne, seaborne, footborne mud sloggers had gotten off their French 40 and 8'er railroad freight cars after a restless three day ride to go right into the fight. The night before the assault when Division Reconnaissance Patrols crossed the river neither the engineers who were to man the assault boats nor the regiment which was to make the assault had arrived from Cologne on the 350 mile train ride.

The Russians were met amid scenes of wild jubulation on May 3 and one war for the 82nd was unofficially over. Prior to the Bleckede-Elbe operation in Northern Germany the "All Americans" had played a major role in the operation to close the Ruhr Sack. In both operations Major Gen. "Jimmy" Gavin's boys of the 82nd were under the 18th Airborne Corps commanded by Major Gen. "Matt" Ridgway, erstwhile 82nd commander.

Other beachhead-bridgeheads established or assaulted by elements of the 82nd include skydrop assaults on Sicily, Salerno, Normandy, and Holland; a sea entry at Anzio, and the vital river crossing assaults at the Volturno, Douve, Merderet, Maas, Waal, Rhine, and Elbe rivers.

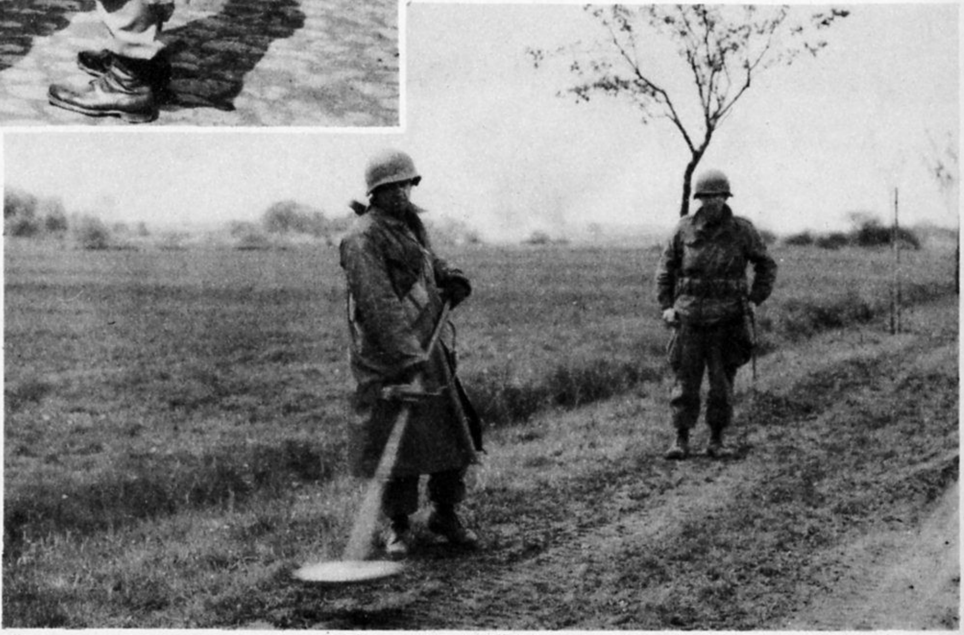
During their 371 combat days "Sim Jim's" boys had fought in 6 countries and been assigned or attached to every British, American or Canadian Army except the British 8th which they fought beside throughout Italy.

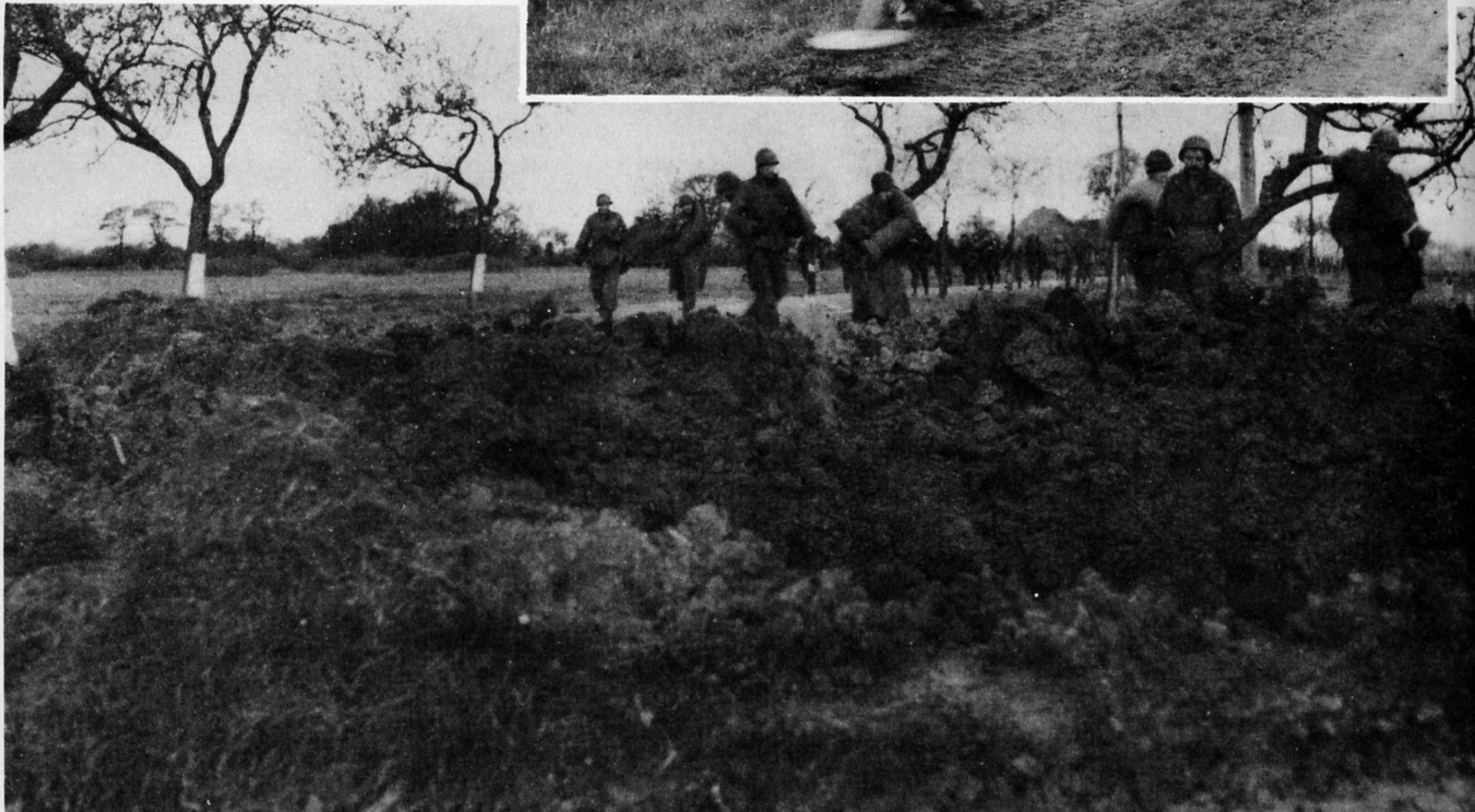


The big brass were right up in front checking everything. Three of our oldest friends, Dempsey of the British Second Army, Montgomery of the 21st Army Group and Ridgway of the 18th Airborne Corps.

The Engineers—

Mine detectors worked overtime on the roads across the Elbe — A new German mine did this (below).





For this German Soldier there would be no surrender.

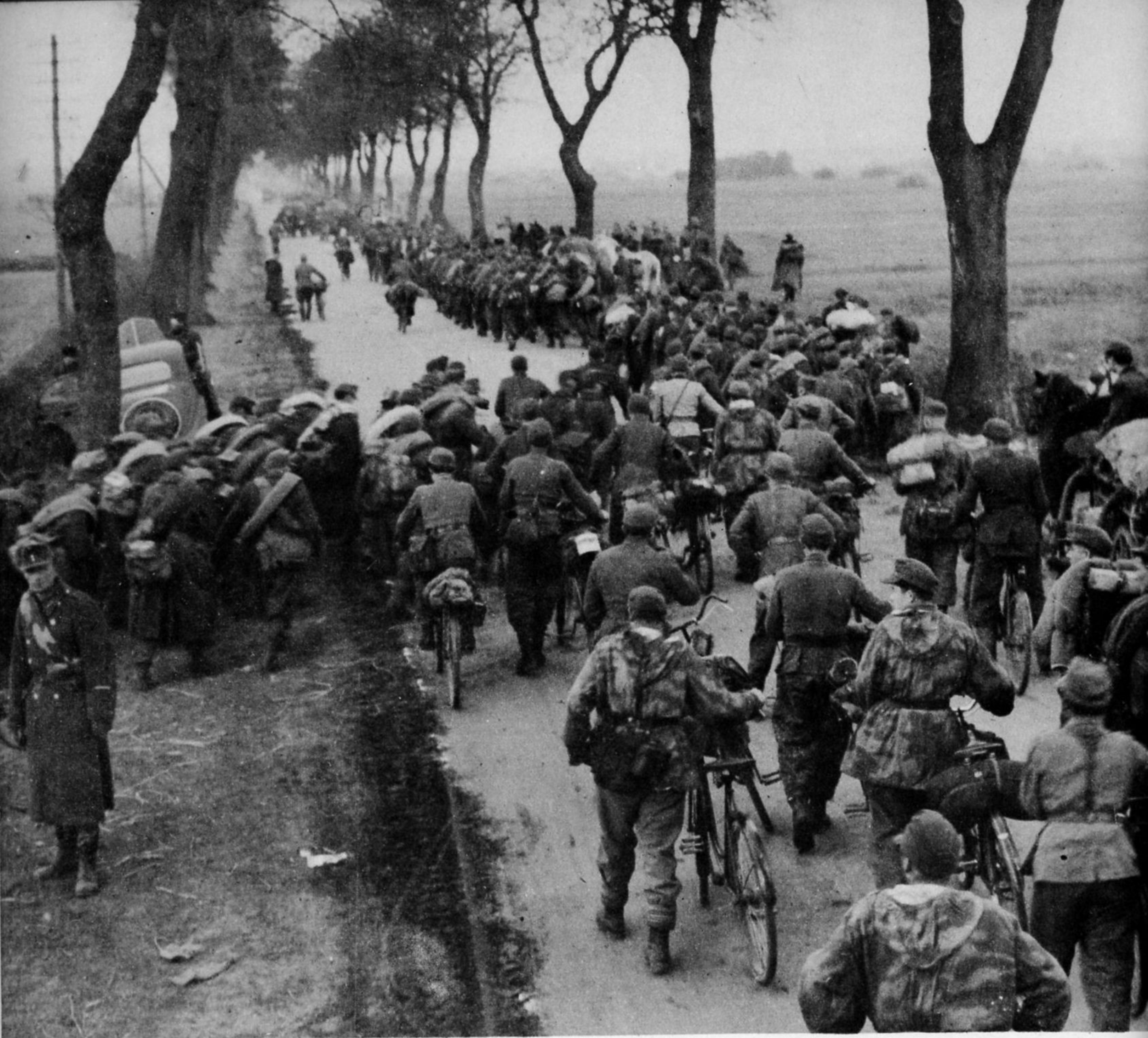
The Race to the End

from Daredevil Tankers by Lt.-Col. G. K. Rubel

At 0530 hours on the morning of the 1st of May, Lieutenant Ledbetter with a 7-tank platoon (from the 740th tank Bn.) joined the First Battalion of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment and crossed the start line with ten paratroopers on the back of each tank. They pushed southeast to the town of Zuckan, a distance of about 20 miles from Bleckede.

During this attack, a tank commander who had joined the Battalion at Duren in March, and who had not worked with the 82nd Airborne Division, called back to Captain Wright on his radio and asked whether the troops he could see out in front of him were enemy or friendly forces. Captain Wright assured him that they were our own paratroopers. The Sergeant was amazed that they were up abreast and even in front of the tanks, spread out in a wide attack. During his experience he had always had to look back to the rear to find the infantrymen. He radioed back to Captain Wright that he sure wished he could have had soldiers like these with him all the time. A few minutes later I heard him call Captain Wright again on the radio and say, "Believe it or not, Captain, four paratroopers on bicycles just passed my tank and are now spearheading. More power to them." A few minutes later he radioed, "Good Lord, here comes a horse and buggy loaded with about eight paratroopers — they are now passing me." Just a little later he again called and said, "Captain, this is the damndest thing I ever saw; look over there to the left; there's about twenty men riding horses; they are paratroopers and are they rounding up Jerries."

I cut in on the conversation at this time and asked the tank commander how the four paratroopers who had passed him riding bicycles were getting along, and he told me that they were doing fine, but had changed to horses. I imagine that by the time this Battalion made its objective they were mounted, practically to a man, on something — a horse, wagon, or bicycle. These paratroopers were rugged individuals. They would walk into a hail of enemy machine gun fire with no more concern than you and I would show in walking into the rain with a raincoat on. They took what they needed as they went along to make their job easier, and had a wonderful time while doing it. Later during the day I talked to Colonel Billingslea, who commanded the 325th Glider Infantry, and he told me that I should have seen this outfit come rolling in over the hills when they had missed their drop zone by some 40 miles in Sicily. They marched through enemy lines riding burroughs, and those funny little wagons that have pictures painted on their sides; some drove horses pulling sleds on which their gear had been piled, while others rode donkeys, horses, and a few sported dilapidated liberated autos. They were afraid that when the Corps Commander saw this outfit coming every man would be quartered and drawn, but to their great relief he fairly doubled with laughter when this column struggled into view.



ENTIRE ARMY GIVES UP

German 21st Army Surrenders to the 82nd Airborne Division

145,000 men jam the division's prisoner-of-war cages.

The 82nd makes history by capturing an entire army.

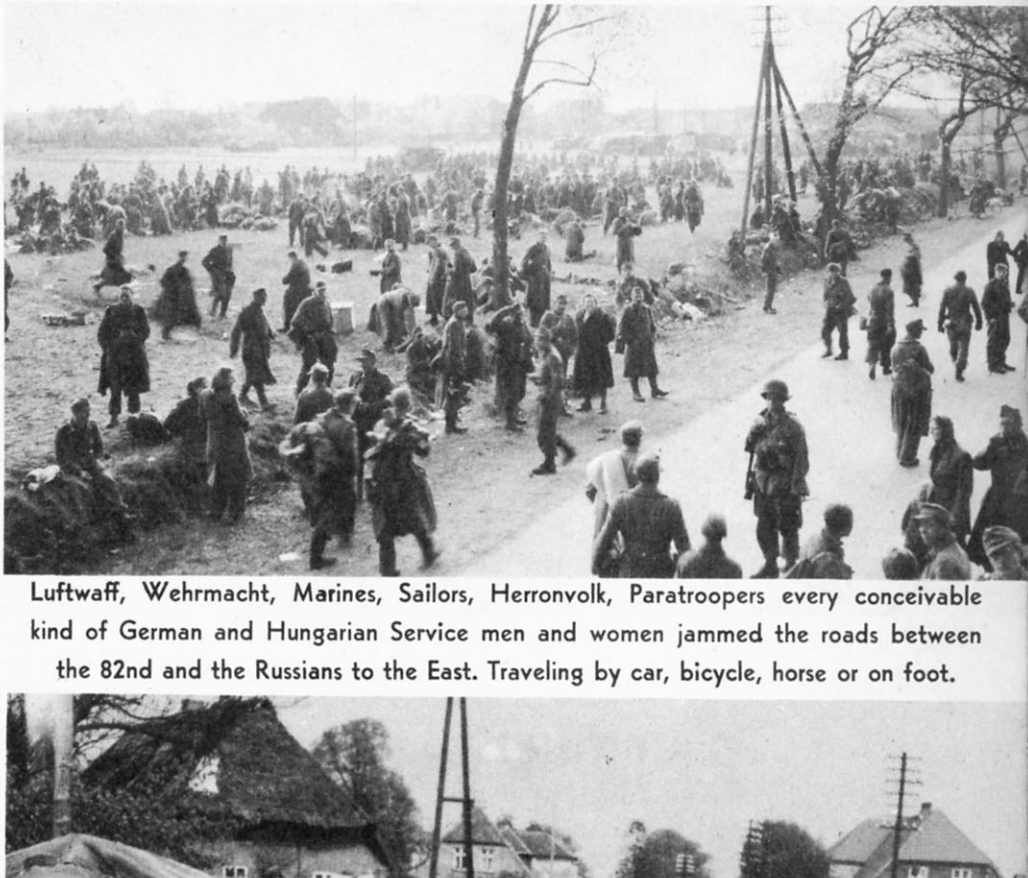
Lt. General Von Tippelskirch leaves General Gavin's C. P. after making the precedent shattering surrender of an entire German Army to one American Division.

With his units badly battered and hopelessly caught between overpowering Russian forces on the east and American, British and Canadian ones on the west, Lieutenant General von Tippelskirch surrendered his 21st Army to the 82nd at Ludwigslust on May 3.

General Gavin called the surrender of an entire army to a single division, "without precedent in American military history."

The surrender followed the 82nd's assault across the Elbe River at Bleckede early on the morning of April 30. The crossing was made by boat under what Major M. B. Ridgway, XVIIIth Airborne Corps commander, termed "the heaviest artillery barrage since Normandy." Once across the river, the paratroopers and glidermen rapidly stormed over heavily - mined roads and fields, sweeping all opposition before them and capturing prisoners by the hundreds.

By May 3, prisoners were pouring into the division cages so fast it was impossible to keep an exact tally. Intelligence officers estimated that 150,000 prisoners passed through the division area.



Luftwaff, Wehrmacht, Marines, Sailors, Herronvolk, Paratroopers every conceivable kind of German and Hungarian Service men and women jammed the roads between the 82nd and the Russians to the East. Traveling by car, bicycle, horse or on foot.

Only the Hungarian Calvary stayed in ranks, retaining discipline and order to the last.

Traveling afoot, in horse-drawn carts, by bicycle, automobile and tank, the 145,000 prisoners make an unforgetable spectacle.

In addition to General von Tippelskirch and his entire staff, the 82nd captured nine other general officers and a great deal of lesser "brass."

Vast amounts of enemy equipment were captured or destroyed. A survey of equipment in the division area revealed 2,008 trucks and cars, 109 halftracks, 17 tanks, 197 miscellaneous vehicles, including tractors, motorcycles and busses, 89 trailers, and seven eight-inch howitzers. No attempt was made to tally small arms and light equipment, including horses from 2 Hungarian calvary Divisions. One of our regiments captured nearly 10 horses per man, and paratroopers opened their own race track, "Sour Kraut Downs" complete with mutuals and bookies.

For more than 36 hours after General von Tippelskirch's surrender, German soldiers poured through the division lines by the thousands. Even in Sicily, where 20,000 prisoners surrendered to the division, the troopers had seen nothing like it. Germans poured in from every direction, swamping prisoner-of-war facilities. They were simply disarmed and herded onto roads leading to the rear. With the Russians at their backs, they needed no prodding.

Roads were jammed almost beyond description. The Germans moved in convoy, not as a military body, but as refugees fleeing the scene of disaster. One could ride along the "front" for miles and not see the end or the beginning of the monstrous queue. A trip of a few miles took hours.

It was the most conglomerate convoy imaginable. With the soldiers were many women and children. Some were

First the Army, then civilians and finally displaced persons in an endless pilgrimage.

82nd men took prisoners in a ratio of 20 Germans to every trooper.

refugees; others apparently had lived with the soldiers for a long time.

Many of the procession rode in Wehrmacht trucks, trailers, tracked vehicles and automobiles. Many others rode in wagons, resting on bundles of hay for their horses. The convoy moved on anything with wheels . . . bicycles . . . charcoal-burning and gasoline civilian autos . . . all manner of carts: ox-drawn, hand-drawn, tractor-drawn.

Many walked until they could walk no farther, then flung themselves along the roadside until they recovered enough strength to push on.

The soldiers were much neater in appearance than those the troopers dug out of mountain crags in Italy, or hedgerows in Normandy or forests in Belgium. There was a great range in their ages. Some of them must have borne arms for Kaiser Wilhelm; others had no need of razors.

All night and all day the rattle of wagons, the clop of hoofs, the rumble of vehicles echoed along the German roads.

These were the once-proud men of the Wehrmacht who overran all Western Europe, spilled over into Africa and were at the gates of Stalingrad and Cairo. But, in the first week of May, 1945, theirs was not an army of conquest; it was an army of defeat.

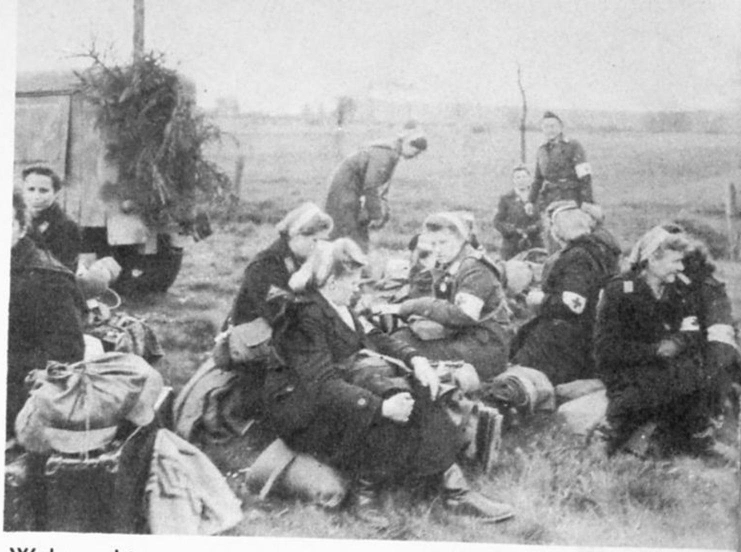
The defeated army was not flanked by rows of shimmering swastikas as it once was. On every side, crude, homemade white flags flew from every house. The army marched over bridges marked for demolition, but never blown. It wound through towns still standing. The Germans did not choose to fight here; their villages were not leveled like so many they had left behind them all over Europe.

The Germans seemed neither elated nor dejected. They had given up the war. They were intent only upon getting away from it.

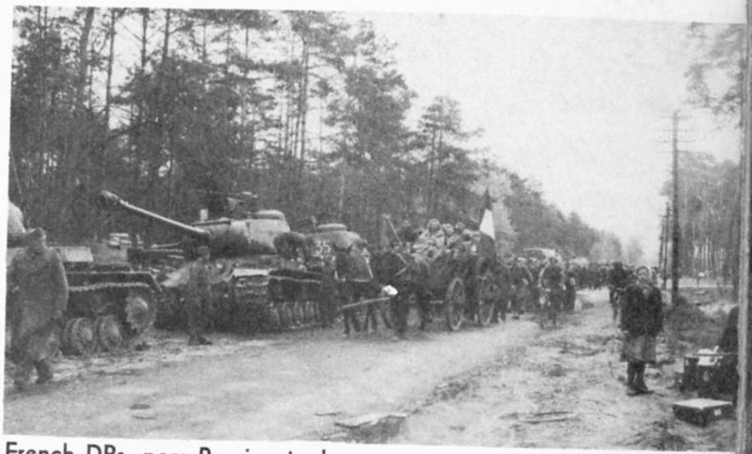
THE LAST MILE

This is the story of the most unbelievable sight in two years of combat for the skytroopers of the 82nd All American Airborne Division.

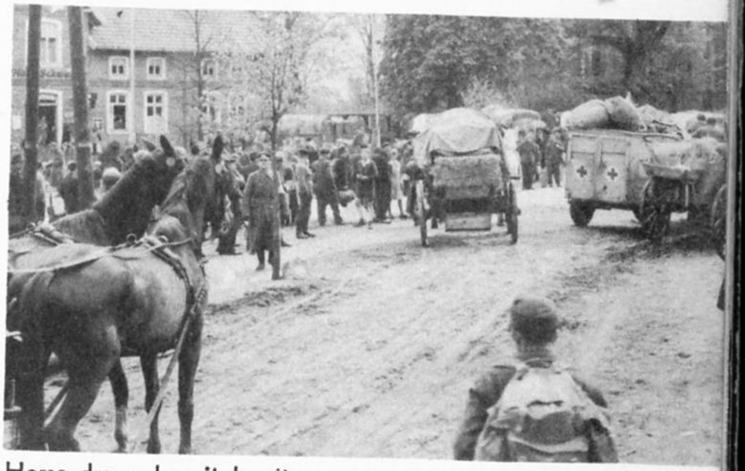
Through Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland, Belgium, and all over western and northern Germany the troopers fought, but never in that abundance of unforgetable experiences did anything stamp a deeper impression than the surrender of the 21st Germany Army at the Bleckede Bridgehead in north Germany. Once in Sicily, 20,000 beaten Italians had surrendered to the All American Paratroopers, but then the Germans had laughed, "Italians were but little children beside the super race." Now, almost two years later, the same 82nd Division once more sees a mass surrender through its battle tested lines. This time it's a German surrender, not a paltry 20,000, but an estimated 150,000, jamming the roads in the disorganized hoards of a beaten army, a beaten people; the same type disorganized stampede that had brought on German sneers two years earlier when the people of another beaten dictator could no longer see honor, hope, or salvation in death and destruction.



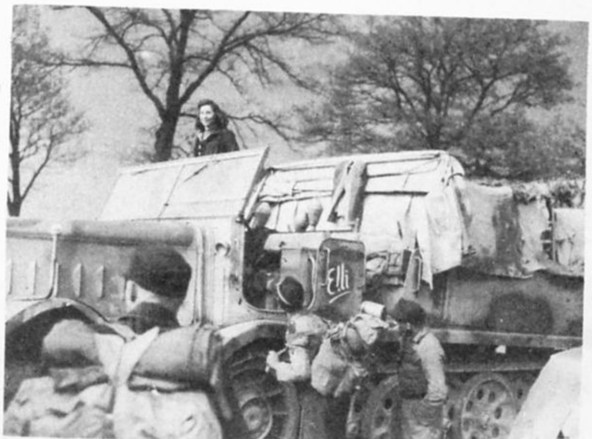
Wehrmacht army nurses, ambulances, kitchen wagons



French DPs. pass Russian tanks.



Horse drawn hospital units.



Soldier wives, children, mistresses appeared in every conceivable kind of conveyance.

The Troopers Return

When the 82nd made its initial leap into Sicily, many paratroopers landed in widely scattered groups. Dropped in a hornet's nest of Heinies, they fought furiously inflicting casualties on 7 times their number, but some were surrounded, exhausted and captured by the Germans. 2 years later, a few days before V-E day many of these Sicilian veterans returned to the same 82nd Division this time on the lower Elbe. "The first free Yank we saw," said Pvt. Bill Grisez, who looks like Buffalo Bill, "was a Sicilian veteran from the same gang we jumped with. He told us we'd missed the show at Salerno, Volturno, Anzio, Normandy, Holland, the Bulge, the Siegfried Line, and the Elbe, but let me tell you we did some traveling too. Why in Sicily we never even had time to open our K rations. First they took us to a transient Prison Camp near Naples. I hear you lucky stiffs took that town later and then occupied it for a while. Anyhow we were only there 2 weeks and they shipped us by train to Staleg 2 B at Hammerstein near the German-Polish border. The trip took 6 nights and 5 days." "Hey Bill, tell them about the maggots at Hammerstein," chimed in John Rinkovsky, Russian speaking American who had jumped the same plane as Grisez and more recently helped talk them through the Russian lines. "Oh yes," Bill said, "They called it barley soup. It was all we got so we ate it anyway, but that barley was full of worms. We were so damned hungry we had to pick the worms out and try to forget it, but it sure wasn't like this chow we're getting now. Some couldn't stand it, but hell, I'm sure healthy.

"From Staleg 2B they forced us to go to labor farms. Let me tell you about the American Red Cross. Those people saved our lives. Twice the Geneva people came around, and I guess the Germans were afraid to hold out on us, because regular as clockwork, in came the Red Cross boxes. They sent us new uniforms too. Our old ones were in rags. I've hung on to this jump jacket though. They got our boots, all but Garcia here, he fought like hell and somehow talked them into letting him keep his. You usually don't talk those people into anything. We were pretty well skin and bones till the Red Cross Packages started coming. I'll take my 'tam' off to them anytime. The Germans always said the chocolates and coffee were American propaganda." "We'd stop 'em cold on that," Lindsey popped in. "We asked them if they could eat any of their propaganda?"

Bill Grisez

"Speaking of propaganda," said Dick Rooney, who joined the un-holy four sometime after his capture at Anzio, "we used to sneak a paper from one of the Polish girls who worked on the farm. The news was always 3 weeks late but we got some of the war news. During the Bulge, the Germans said both the Russian and Allied fronts were being smashed. They really believed they would win."

"Yes," said Bill, who seemed to be the spokesman for the group, "they thought they were going to win, but then the Russians started to attack again. That's when

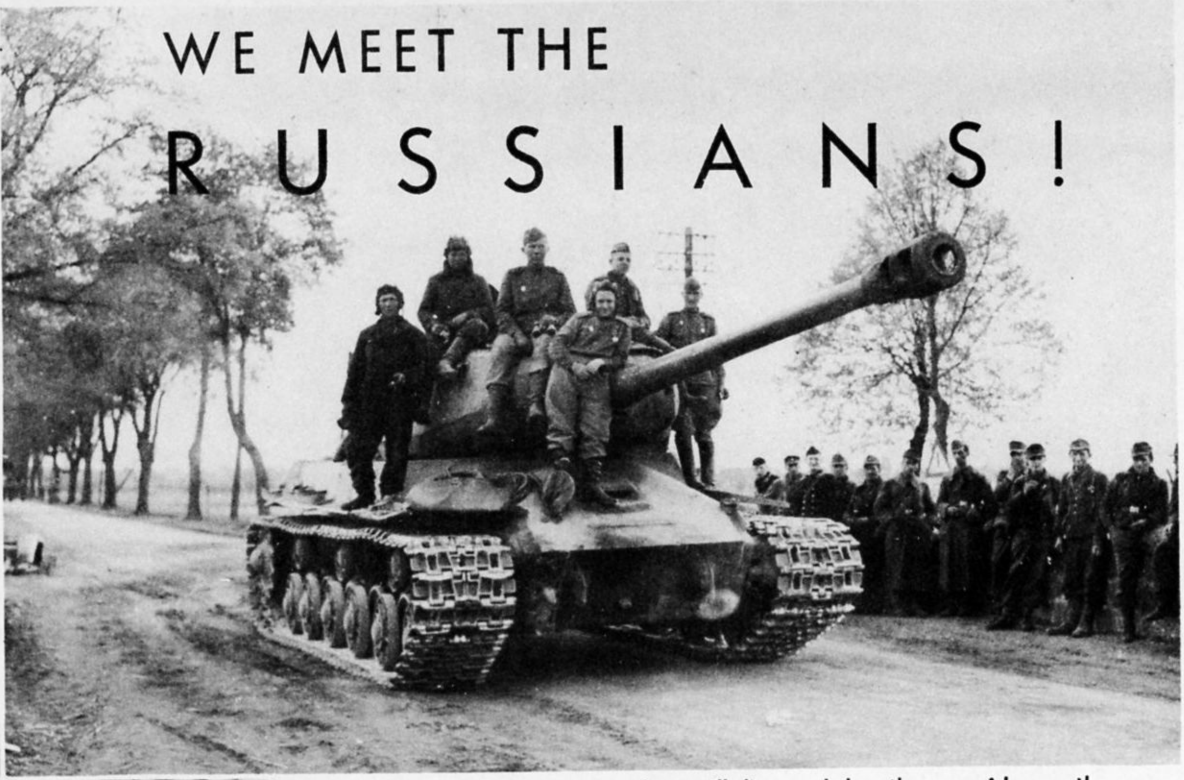
82nd troopers captured in Sicily and Italy — they escaped to find their Division again. This time across the Elbe in Northern Germany.

we started our 500 kilometer walk. On the night of the 27th of Jan. the Russians were only 4 miles away from Dick's farm and 12 from mine. They made us march. We were praying to get caught by the Russians but with 3 guard companies it's hard to stall very much. We started out in knee deep snow with home-made sleds. At the end of the first day they made us throw the sleds away and carry everything on our back. It was bitter cold and lots of guys got trench foot, but somehow all of our gang stayed with it, and we've been walking ever since. Two days ago after our guards had thrown down their weapons and run away, we met the Russians. They asked Rinkovsky if we wanted a ride, but we didn't want one. After 500 kilometers, we weren't going to ride the last few miles.

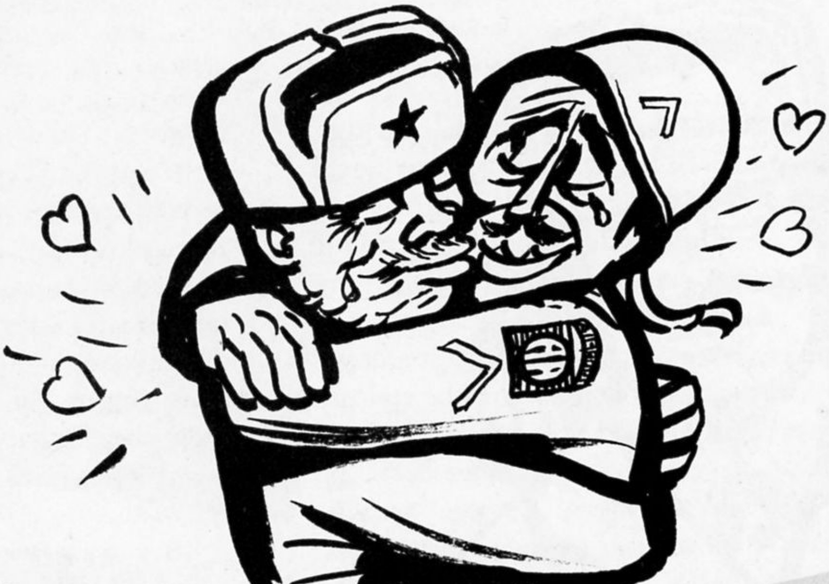
"There were 400 Americans, 300 Frenchies, 100 Serbs, and 300 Russians in our prisoner march from East Prussia. At least that's how many we started with. We used to tell them the Russians were right behind us. They were scared to death. They honestly believed that the Germans and Americans were going to join and fight the Russians. Those guards had their families, mistresses, and everything with them. It got so bad near the end that we had to laugh. A couple of days ago they all took off. They wanted us to take them prisoner, but we told 'em we didn't want to cheat our Russian allies out of their prize catch. We got these Lugers when they took off. For 2 years they had us where they wanted us. I wonder where they are now. Nobody even wants them.

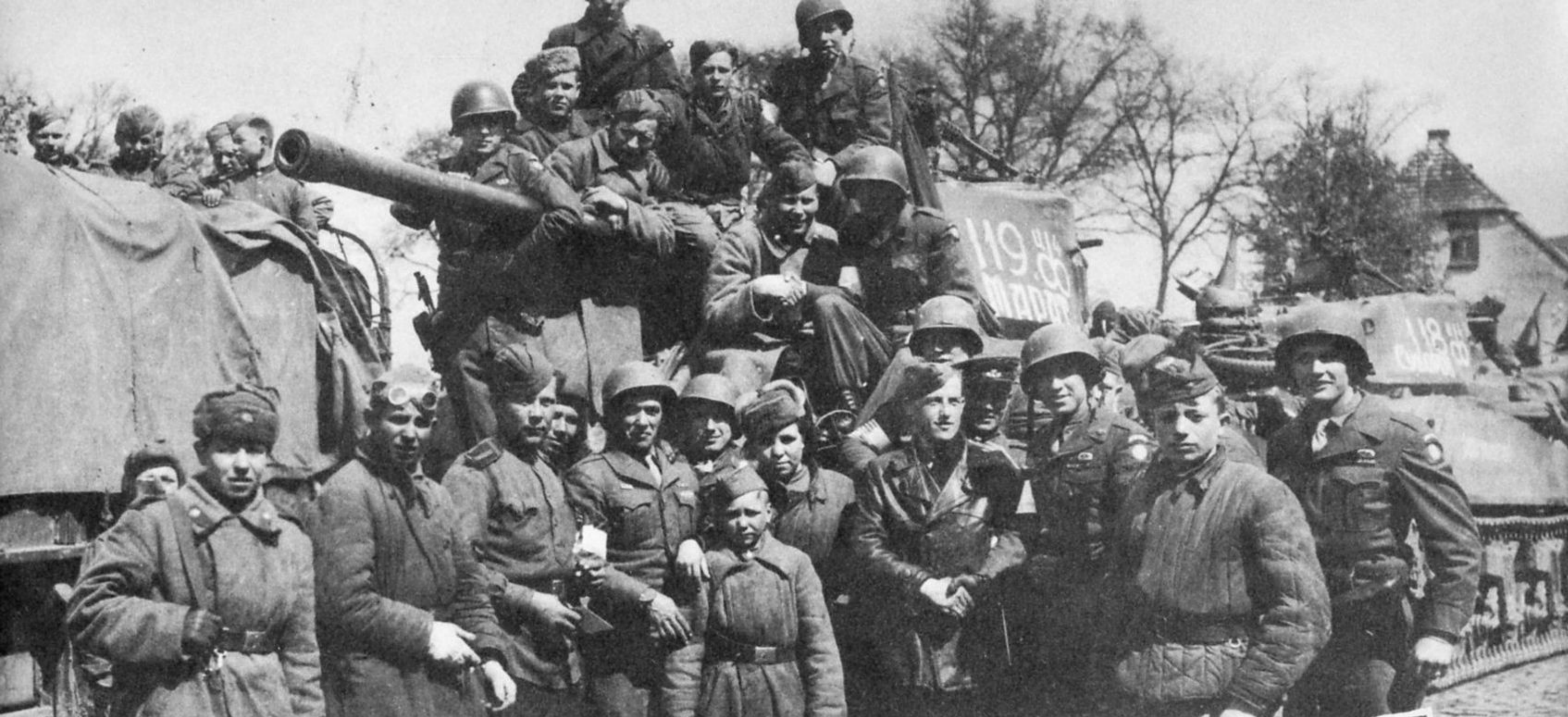
"Boy were we ever surprised when we recognized the 1st Yank we saw. ·I still don't know his name but he had that good old 82nd "AA" Patch on and I know he jumped with us in Sicily. They tell me there aren't many of those fellows left. That was the fightenest bunch of Joes I ever hope to see. Well anyhow we're back and it's great. Boy were we surprised. We kept hearing of the old 82nd all over Europe. I guess you guys have fought in more countries than any of the divisions. We though sure you'd be home by now. We've had a long rest, how about us trading places with a couple of the old gang? They can go home and we've got a couple of personal scores to settle."

WE MEET THE RUSSIANS!



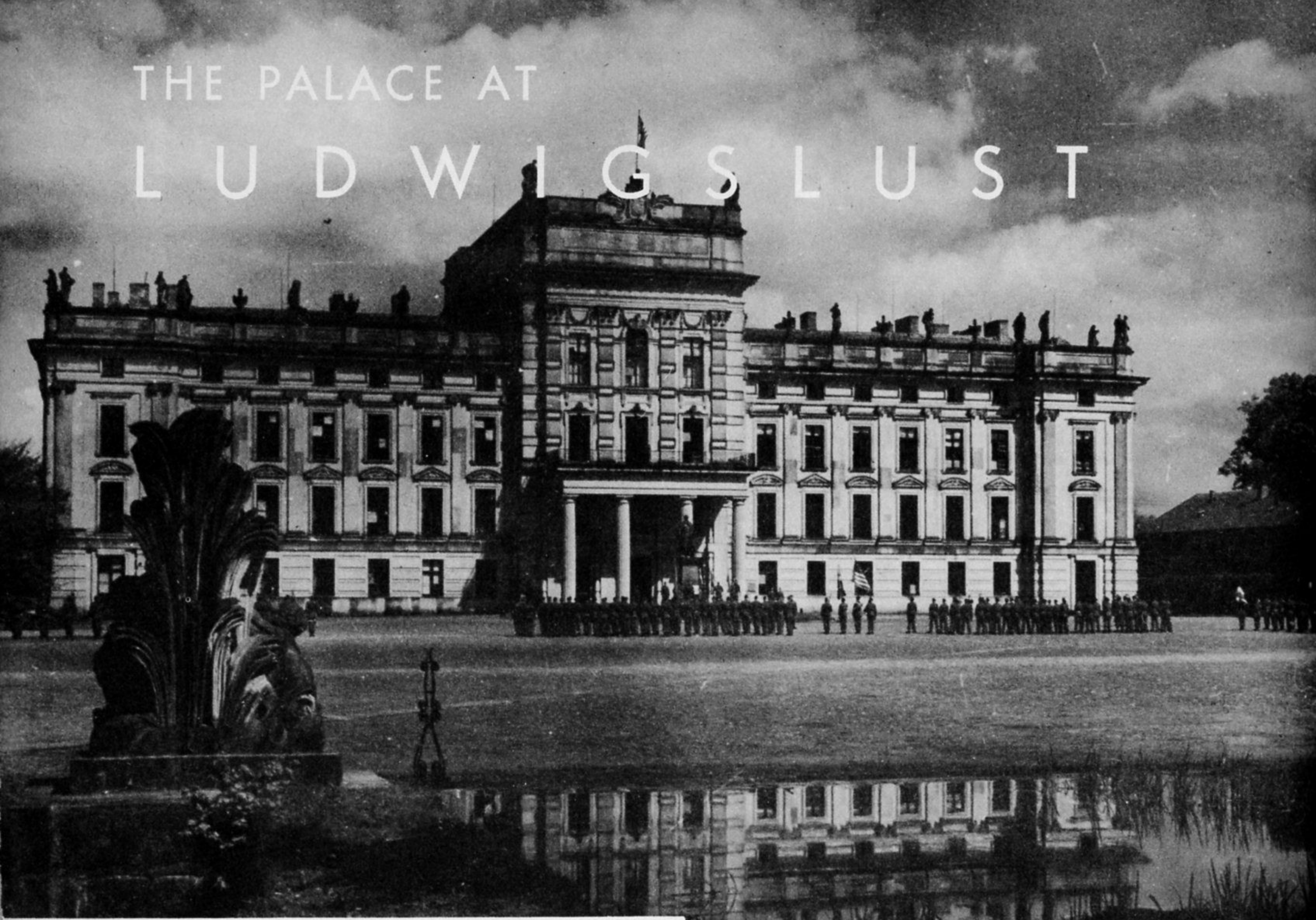
German stragglers still lingered by the wayside as the first Russian tanks lumbered into view.

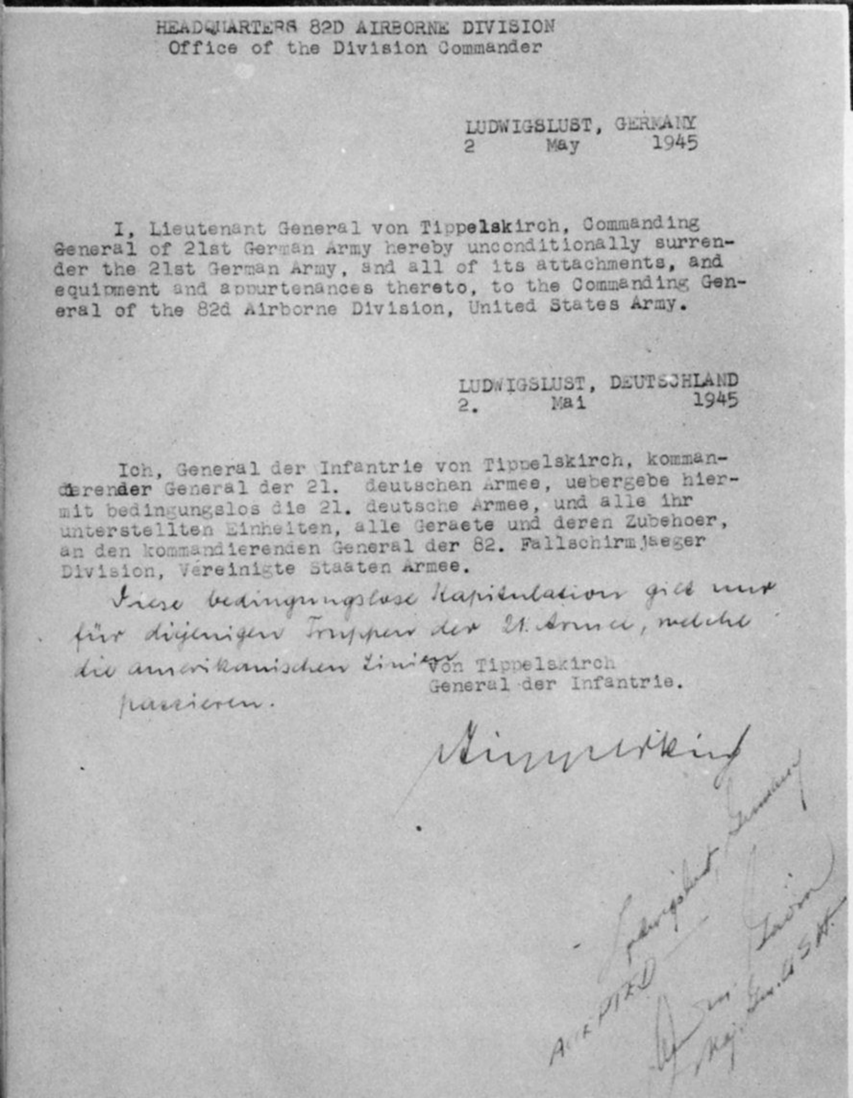




82nd Recons and Russian tankers join hands at Grabow.

THE PALACE AT LUDWIGSLUST





HEADQUARTERS 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
Office of the Division Commander

LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY
2 May 1945

I, Lieutenant General von Tippelskirch, Commanding General of 21st German Army hereby unconditionally surrender the 21st German Army, and all of its attachments, and equipment and appurtenances thereto, to the Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division, United States Army.

LUDWIGSLUST, DEUTSCHLAND
2. Mai 1945

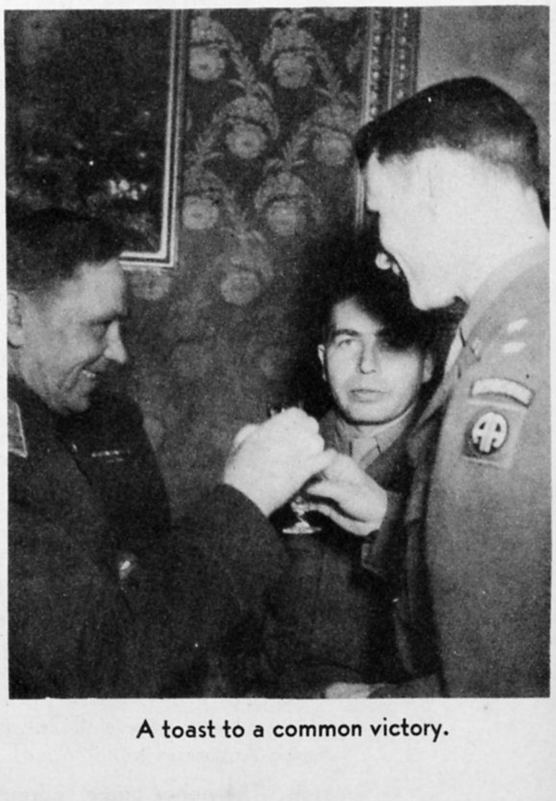
Ich, General der Infantrie von Tippelskirch, kommandierender General der 21. deutschen Armee, uebergebe hiermit bedingungslos die 21. deutsche Armee, und alle ihr unterstellten Einheiten, alle Geraete und deren Zubehoer, an den kommandierenden General der 82. Fallschirmjaeger Division, Vereinigte Staaten Armee.

Diese bedingungslose Kapitulation gilt nur für diejenigen Truppen der 21. Armee, welche die amerikanischen Linien passieren.

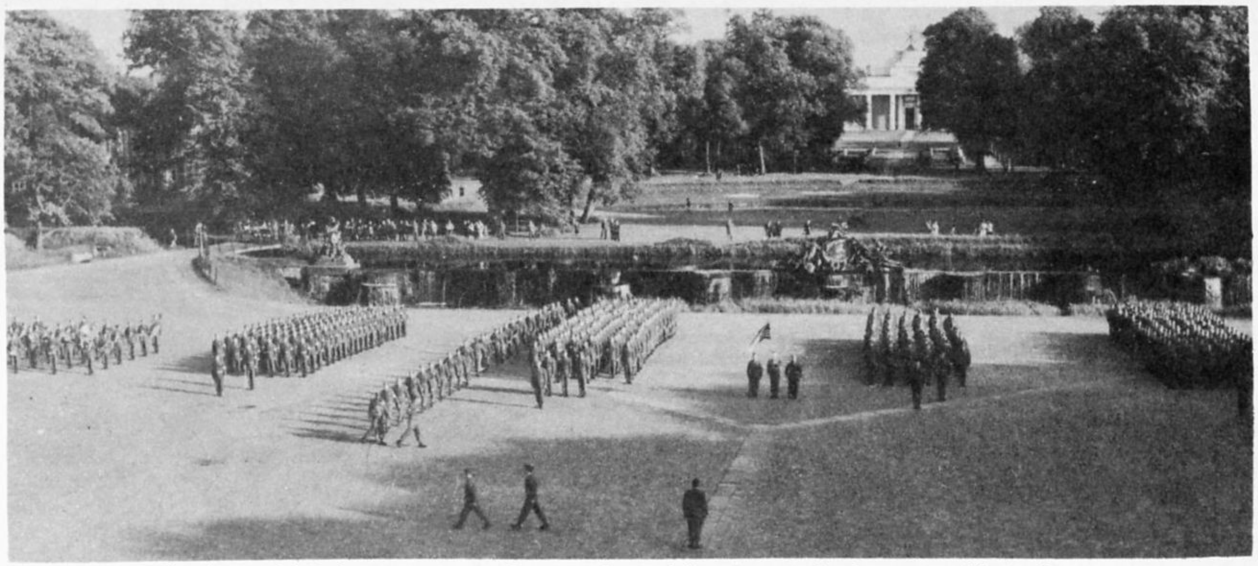
Von Tippelskirch
General der Infantrie.

Ludwigslust, Germany
ACCEPTED
James Gavin
Maj. Gen. U.S.A.

Div. Headquarters was in the Palace of the Grand Duke where Tippelskirch surrendered his army to the 82nd Division.



A toast to a common victory.



The beautiful Palace court was Review Ground for America's sharpest soldiers, Russo-Anglo American relations were never better than in the village of Ludwigslust.

Interpreters had a field day as Anglo-American and Russian generals explained their troop movements on the map.

Time out to play — Russian and American Staffs do a little group singing.

Anglo-American honor guard passes in review for Russian, British and American generals. The honor guard represented the British 6th Airborne, American 82nd Airborne and American 8th Inf. Divs.

Concentration Camp Wobelein

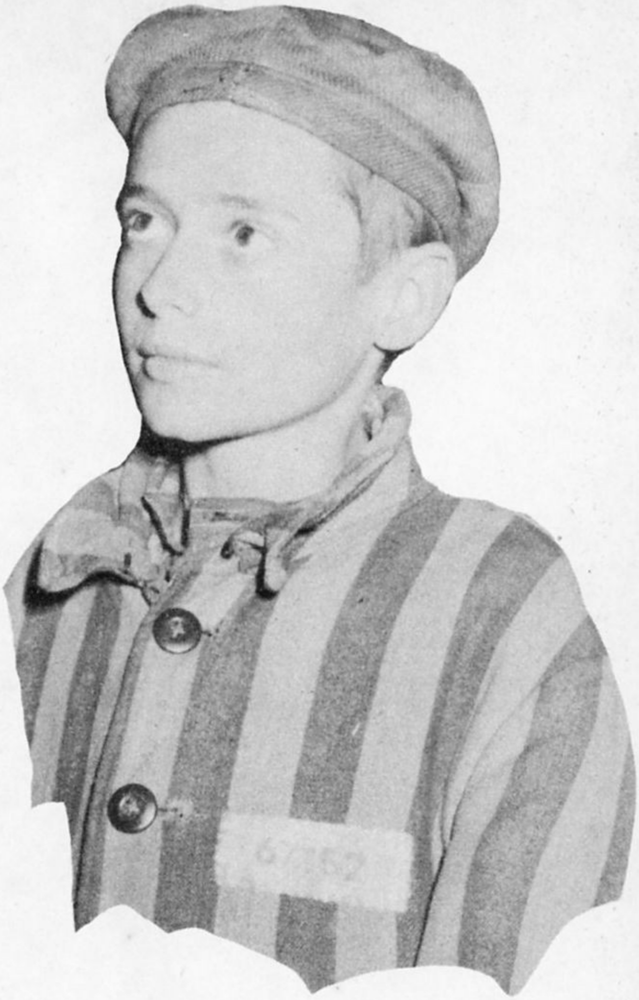
MY GUIDE was Peter G. Martin, 67-year old Paris works manager who two years ago made the mistake of questioning Nazi politics. Somehow, he had had the strength to carry on where younger men died by his side.

The first barracks was filled with Jews. Most were too weak to get up and go outside. We had to step gingerly, because traces of chronic dysentery spotted the already filthy floor. Pitiful starving men lay in the nauseating stench beside those already dead. Living and dead were side-by-side, only the blue black skin color of the dead to differentiate between the two. One man, still strong enough to sit up and talk, was crying and jabbering with Peter like a baby. "Why don't you move outside?" I asked him. He reached down and lifted a black greasy bandage from his gaunt leg to reveal a long festering infection with maggots oozing about in the pus . . .

"He hurt his leg on our trip up here five weeks ago," Peter said. "We worked in the salt mines between Magdeburg and Brunswick. When the Germans heard the Yanks were coming, they shipped us here. It took us eight days in box cars to go 120 miles. We had no water and nothing to eat except a few raw potatoes. At each halt, we got off our box cars to bury the dead. All of us suffered from malnutrition and dysentery. Only the strongest could stand it."

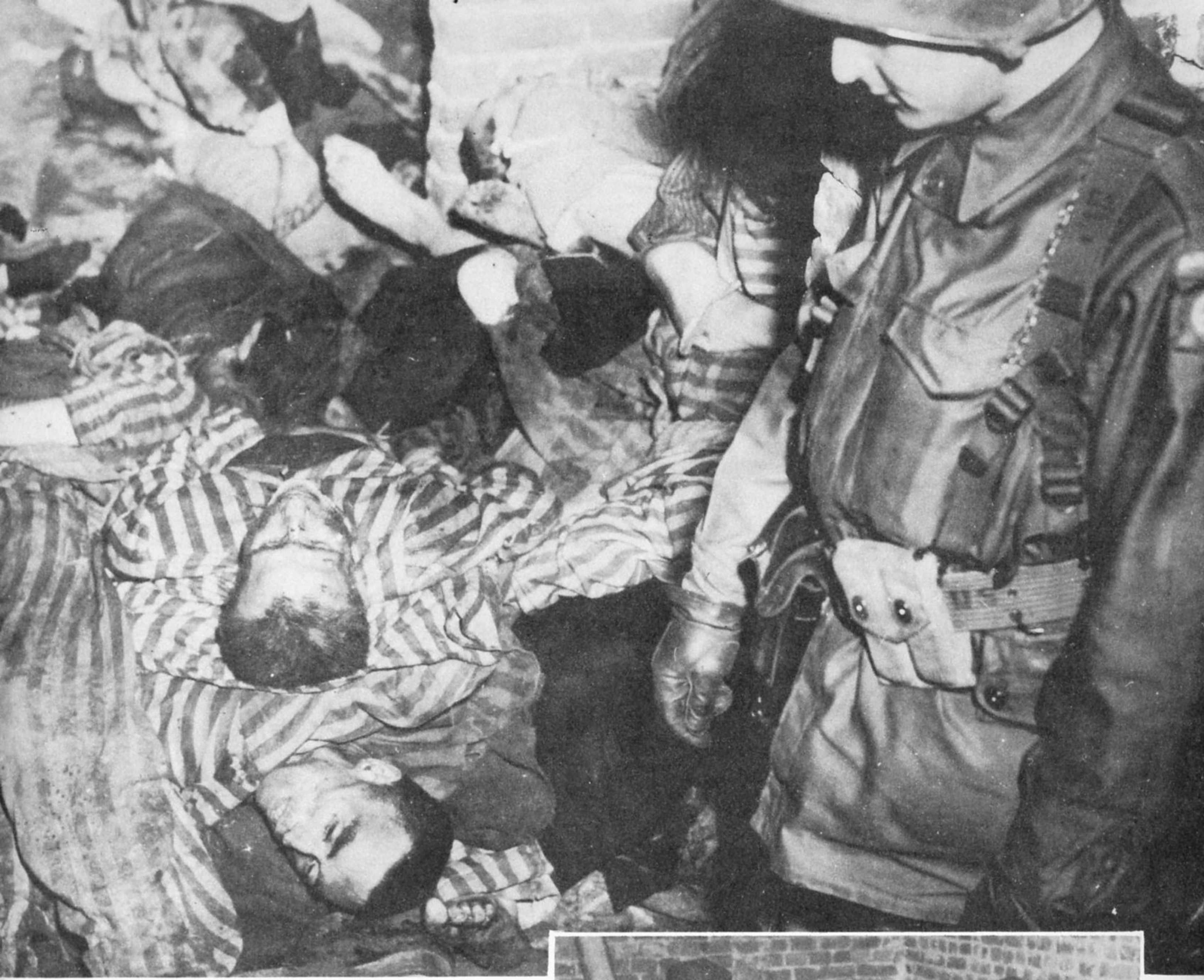
I was about to vomit from the stench, myself, when we finally got back outside. One old pump furnished the water for the 4,000 political prisoners in this enclosure, or should I say 3,000. In the last three weeks, almost a quarter had died of starvation.

The next two living skeletons we saw were Robert and Paul from Budapest. Robert was 23. He had been educated at Chattenhein school in England. His father was a world exporter of ladies' finery in clothes, but they had committed the unpardonable crime of being Jewish, so Robert's mother and dad were killed, and he was thrown into a concentration camp. He tried to write his name for me, but his fingers wouldn't respond. He humbly apologized for his clumsiness and introduced me to his adopted brother, Paul. Paul was 13. At the age of 10, he had been thrown into a concentration camp. He, too, was a Jew. Paul got the same treatment the others received. His growth was stunted by the complete lack of proper nourishment. Four times, Paul had been to the gas chambers, and four times they had withdrawn him at the last minute, one of a few they always pulled out to tell of the hundreds not given the chance to live or die on the starvation-disease line margin.



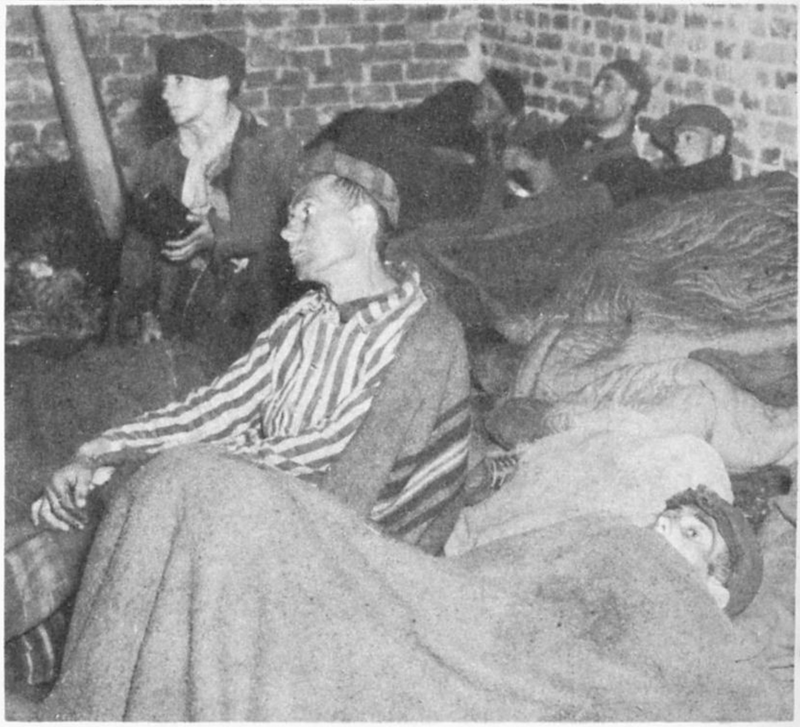
"Paul"—At 13 a veteran of 3 years in concentration camps.

The next barracks we hit had been some kind of a washroom. Long cement troughs were filled with filthy water, and beside them strung a border of dead bodies. In the corners were tiers of dead, stacked like logs in a wood pile so that they could be easily



counted. The Germans had been systematic to the last—even in storing the dead. An English speaking Dutchman had joined us. Death had been heaviest among his people whose bodies, long accustomed to rich foods, seemed the first to disintegrate.

He and Peter told of the S. S. Yes, the S. S. had begun to soften up on them gradually after Stalingrad, but it had not helped. The Germans never managed the slave laborers themselves, but turned it over to contemptible internee overseers — released convicts who took out their personal revenue on the peoples of the country who had convicted them, or just for the extra privileges and better food the S. S. permitted them. The Dutchman took off his shirt and showed me half-healed welts dealt him by one of these overseers. In the last week, the



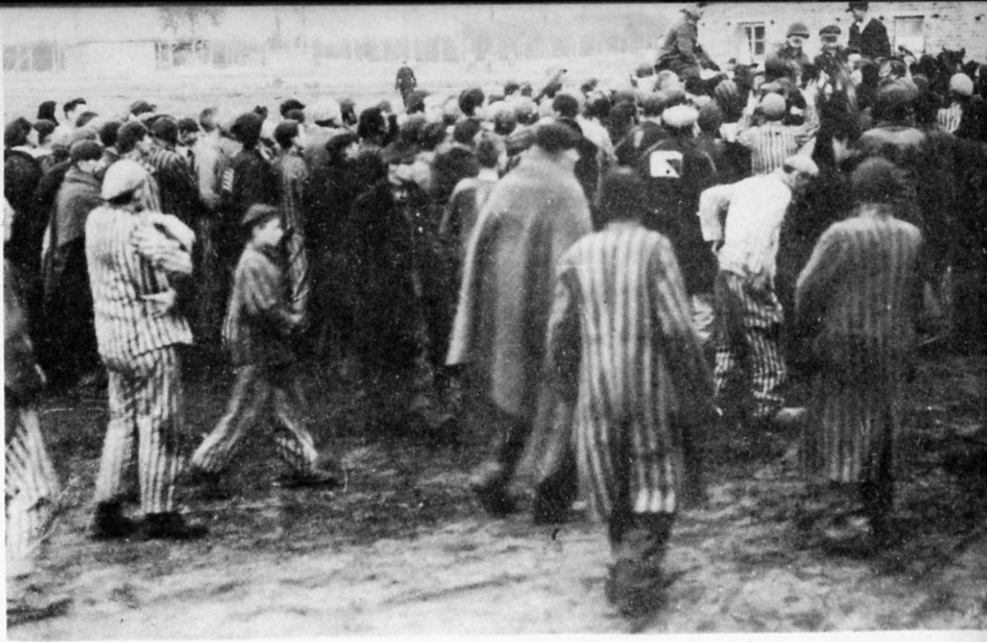
"Why don't you move outside," I asked him. He reached down and lifted a greasy black bandage to reveal his gaunt infected leg.

S. S. had run away turning their weapons over to the convicts. These scum would stand outside the double barbed wire fence and shoot at anything they saw moving.

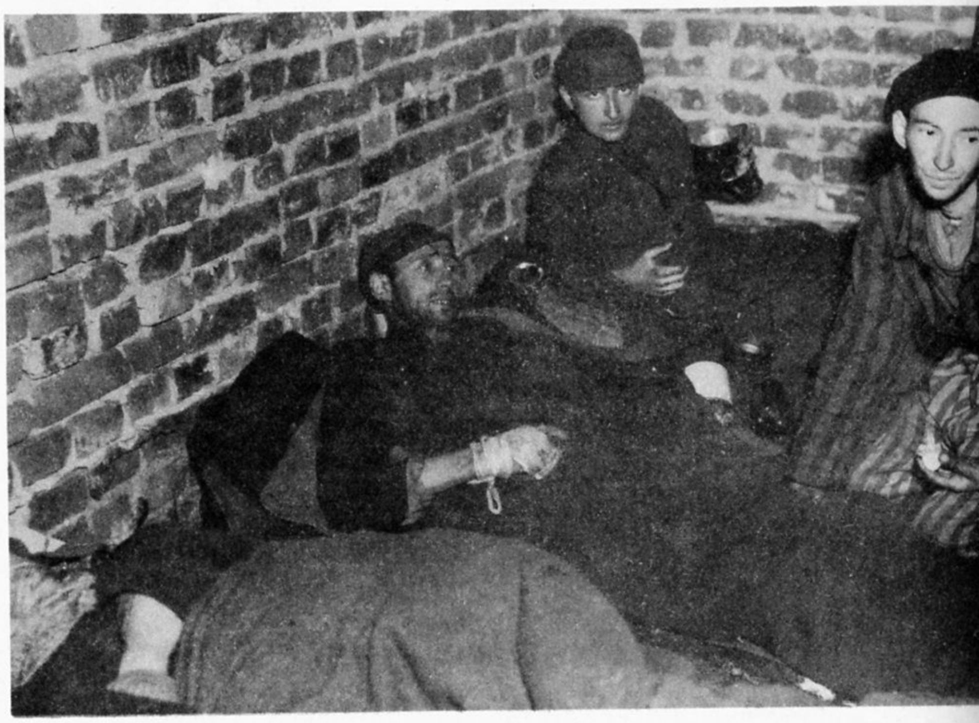
Only a few of the internees still had the mental or physical strength to feel resentment. Hysteria was common, sanitation was nil, and medical care consisted of advice from the two prisoner doctors who were given no medical supplies.

We heard a commotion outside and walked out. The first Allied wagon of chow had arrived — loaves of black bread and cans of meat from a German warehouse in town. The people were like cattle. They stormed and clawed the wagon; they stepped on each other in the stampede, and they fought like savages over each other's food. One frenzied mad man got up off his sick bed (the black, lousy straw they slept on), ran a few yards and dropped dead in convulsions. Grown men, looking more dead than alive, bawled and screamed at my feet to do something—to get them food. One licked the crumbs off the black, scorched ground where three others had torn a loaf of bread apart.

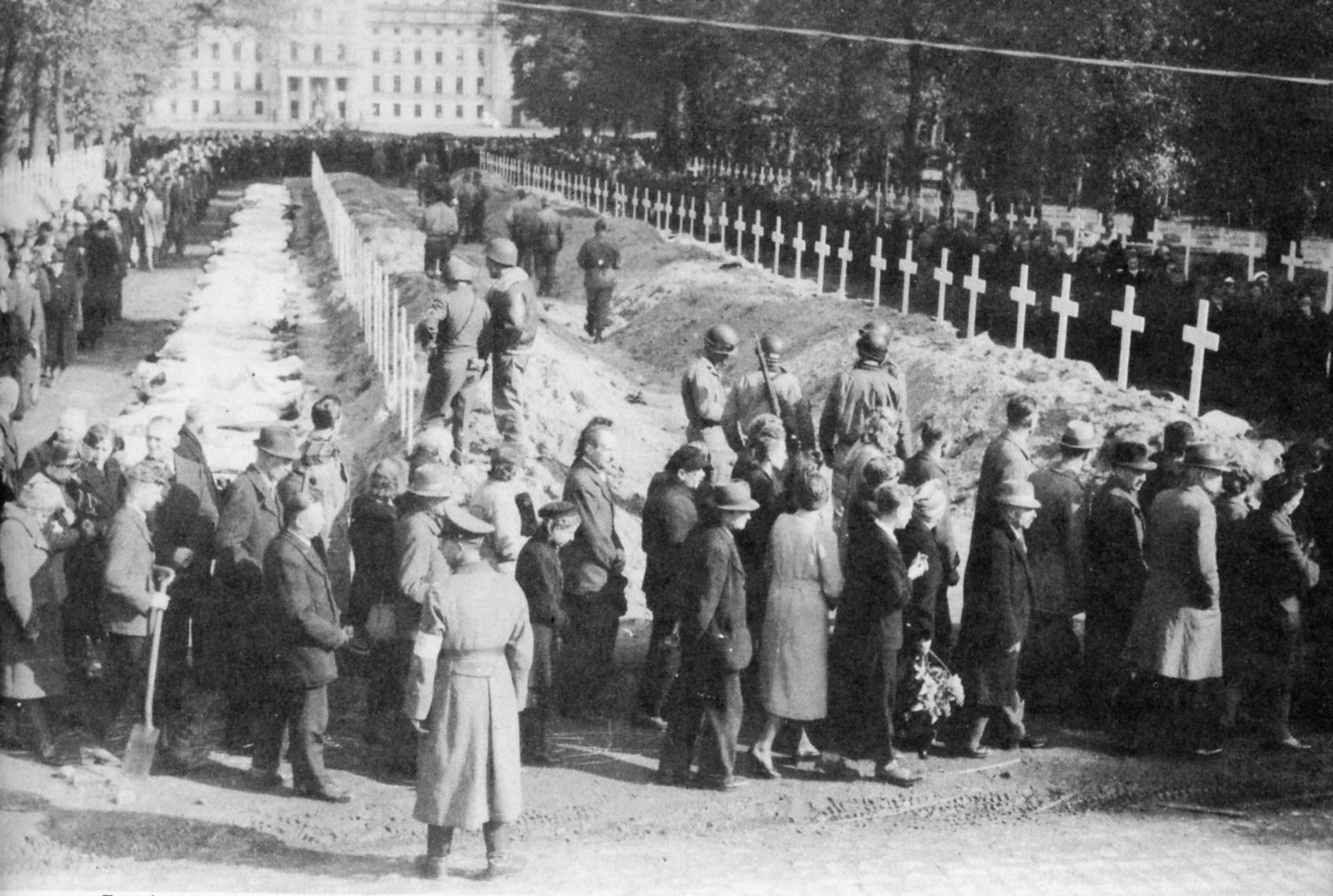
For those of us who came and saw the faces of the living and the rotting bodies of the dead, there can be no forgetting the crimes of the most uncivilized era in the history of the world. There can be no forgetting that the Poles, Czechs, French, Dutch, Danes, Norwegians, Belgians, and the still dying Span-



Starving men fought like animals for food from the first bread wagon. Below—The following day men were too weak to move but food had arrived and army doctors dressed their wounds.



Below—Conditions in the neighboring women's camp were almost as bad. For this woman some hope now mingles with the horror of the past.



Ten thousand Germans filed by "or else" but their children and their children's children will want to know, "What manner of men are these buried in the Palace Plaza?"

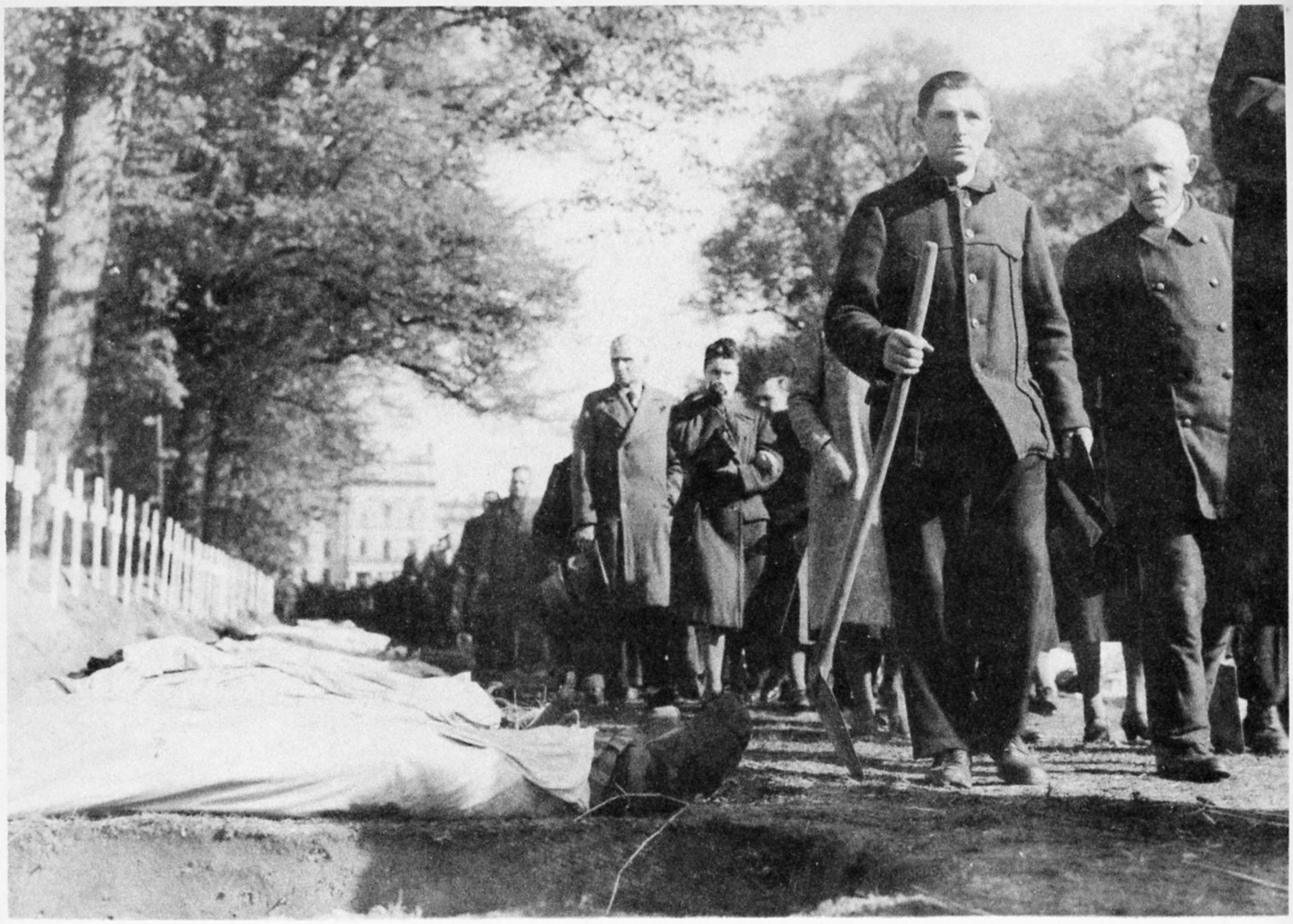
ish Republicans have no less right to life, food, and happiness than our next door neighbor in Philadelphia, Dallas, or Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

I thanked the old Frenchman and promised I'd let as many as possible know what he'd somehow lived to tell. I wiped the defication off my Jump boots and climbed into the jeep to go. The old man was smiling, but I didn't have the strength to return the smile.

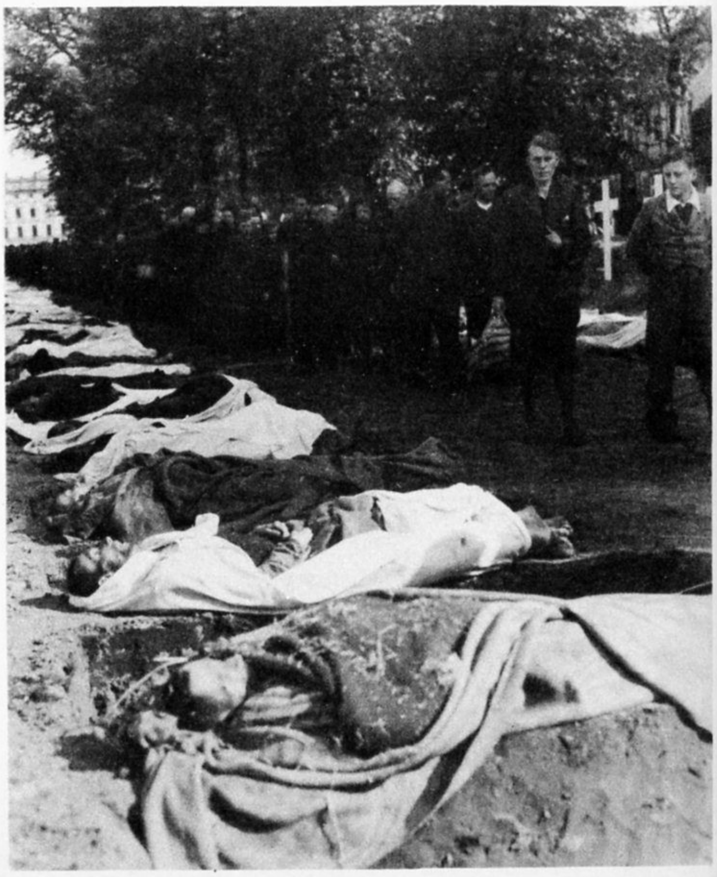
The battle was over, but not forgotten. In Ludwigslust, Germany, two days after V-E day, the total population was brought out to honor the Dutch, French, Hungarian and Polish dead from the nearby Wobelein Concentration camp. One thousand had died from starvation, victims of the filth and disease of a German prison camp. Two hundred of these bodies, not already rotted, were brought to the city square and given "proper and reverent" burial by the 82nd Airborne Division Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Chaplains, in the name of a God who respects no super-race but only humanity, regardless of race, creed or color. These miserably desecrated Nazi victims had known more than any of us the reason why we fight, and why we can never permit this to happen again on this earth.

The Germans of Ludwigslust were not happy when representatives from every profession were picked to dig the six-foot burial holes and make the crosses. Neither were they happy when the military government told them that the burial in the town square would have 100% attendance, or else! They mumbled things about American propaganda and insisted that German civilization had been done an injustice. Then they came, they saw, and they heard what had really happened, with or without their complacent knowledge of what went on four miles from their comfortable homes.

Most of the Germans, hats in hands at the order of G. I.'s, did not appear greatly moved by the sight, but for generations to come they can explain to their children and their children's children the meaning of the big white crosses in the beautiful palace plaza. Ludwigslust can never forget the human beings whom they permitted to starve within an hour's walk from their marble palace and comfortable homes.



The citizens of Nazi Germany file by the bodies of those whom they persecuted. From housewives to Army Generals the Germans were made to pay their respects and see what they had allowed to go on in their country.



The Chaplain's Burial Address

By MAJOR GEORGE B. WOODS

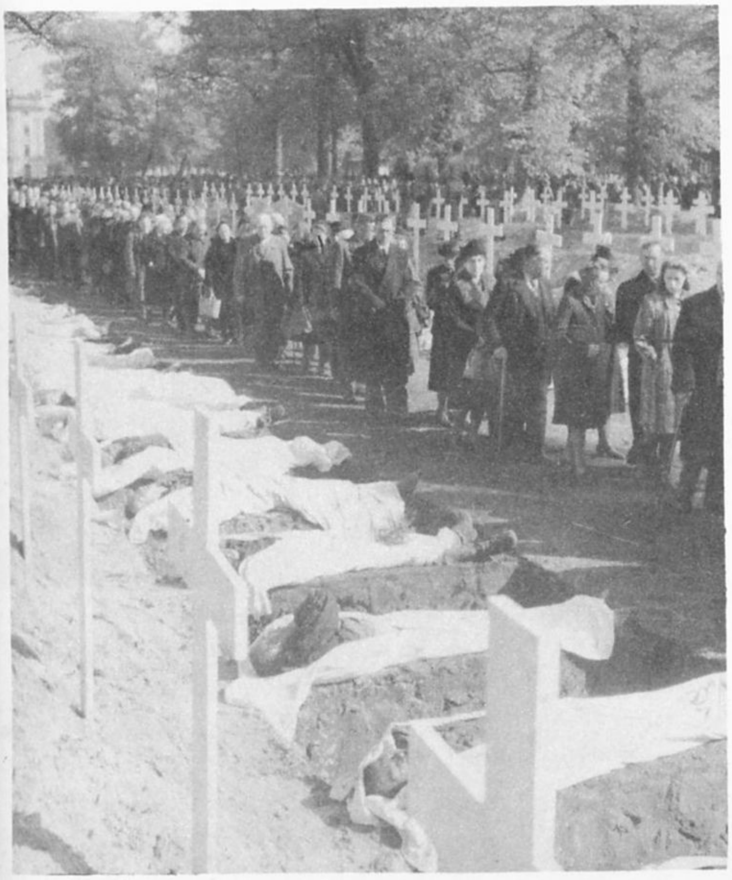
"We are assembled here today before God and in the sight of man to give a proper and reverent burial to the victims of atrocities committed by armed forces in the name and by the order of the German Government. These 200 bodies were found by the American army in a concentration camp 4 miles north of the city of Ludwigslust.

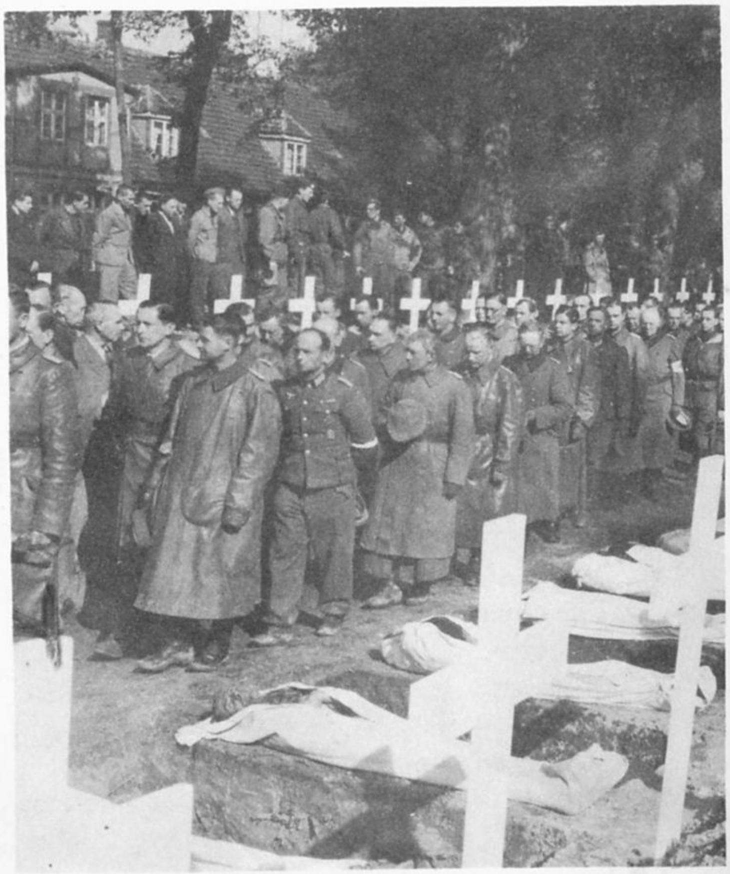
"The crimes here committed in the name of the German people and by their acquiesence were minor compared to those to be found in concentration camps elsewhere in Germany. Here there were no gas chambers, no crematories; these men of Holland, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and France were simply allowed to starve to death. Within 4 miles of your comfortable homes 4,000 men were forced to live like animals, deprived even of the food you would give to your dogs. In three weeks 1,000 of these men were starved to death; 800 of them were buried in pits in the nearby woods. These 200 who lie before us in these graves were found piled 4 and 5 feet high in one building and lying with the sick and dying in other buildings.

"The world has long been horrified at the crimes of the German nation; these crimes were never clearly brought to light until the armies of the United Nations overran Germany. This is not war as conducted by the international rules of warfare. This is murder such as is not even known among savages.

"Though you claim no knowledge of these acts you are still individually and collectively responsible for these atrocities, for they were committed by a government elected to office by yourselves in 1933 and continued in office by your indifference to organized brutality. It should be the firm resolve of the German people that never again should any leader or party bring them to such moral degradation as is exhibited here.

It is the custom of the United States Army through its Chaplain's Corps to insure a proper and decent burial to any deceased person whether he be civilian, or soldier, friend, or foe, according to religious preference. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces has ordered that all atrocity victims be buried in a public place, and that the cemetery be given the same perpetual care that is given to all military cemeteries. Crosses will be placed at the heads of the graves; a stone monument will be set up in memory of these deceased. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish prayers will be said by Chaplains Wood, Hannan and Wall of the 82nd Airborne Division for these victims as we lay them to rest and commit them into the hands of our Heavenly Father in the hope that the world will not again be faced with such barbarity."





DAN BOST—"ALL AMERICAN" JUMPER

There can be no such animal as a typical parachutist. Every Eighty-Second Airborne Trooper is by the nature of his mode of warfare an individualist of the first rank. His deeds individually and collectively are legend in the annals of American courage and initiative. His personality is as unpredictable as his dependability in combat.

Not the least amazing of the cocky lads who do not typify anything or anybody is Sgt. Dan Bost, ex-Detroit stunt jumper with 147 jumps to his credit.

Dan with a group of volunteers waits to load up. "Now listen here Dan, no funny stuff. Don't be taking any chances."

SEVEN YEARS ago civilian Dan Bost was working in Detroit, Michigan, when he got the idea that jumping out of a plane looked like fun. He tried it and has never changed his mind since. His name early became a watchword around Midwestern airports as he tumbled out of one barnstorming plane after another. "On weekends I'd jump at the local airports to attract crowds," Bost says. "They used to pay a little but it isn't the pay at all. You couldn't pay a civilian enough to jump if he didn't want to. In the Army it's different. It takes a lot of 'guts' to jump in the Army but as a civilian nobody is depending on you. You either like it or you don't. I like it. We didn't have the good chutes then that we have now, but we didn't have to 'walk down a flak ally' in the middle of the night and the sky wasn't full of planes and other parachutes."

"They used to go for that Bat Man stuff. It's simple. You make the suits yourself out of canvas and an old suit of overalls. I used to jump out of the plane at about 10,000 feet with wings spread. You soar back and forth like a flying squirrel then pull your arms into your side and really tear through space."

It was this earthbound plummet which used to bring the gasps out of the crowds at picnics and homecomings. At the last moment the tiny white chute always streamed out of its case and opened to float earthward with its daredevil batman dangling safely beneath the canopy.

Another favorite stunt to draw the crowds to his friends airports was Dan's famous malfunction drop. In those days all jumping was "free jump" and there was no emergency chute. The crowd knew this and it was a play on this knowledge which made Bost's malfunction drop such a heart pounding sensation.

As Dan displayed his threadbare equipment and got into the rickety old plane an announcer would begin his build up over the public address system. As far as the crowd knew Dan was simply to make a high altitude jump and that in itself would have been thrilling enough. As the plane approached the predesignated height for the jump, however, the announcer would have the crowd worked up to a feverish suspense with his commentary. Then out would come the speck, named Bost, spinning dizzily earthward. Everything was routine so far. The announcer chatted endlessly, to add to the zeal. What's the matter? Why doesn't the chute open? Why doesn't he pull the ripcord? Dan, Dan, are you sick? Have you gone mad? Why don't you pull that ripcord?

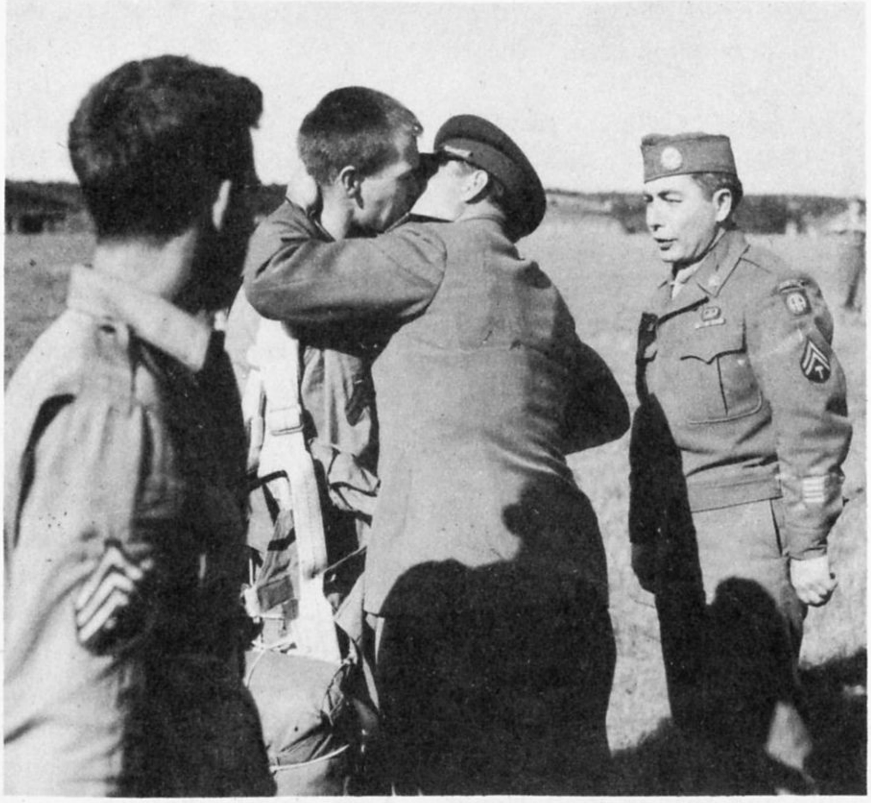
Suddenly silk began to blouse out from the tiny form. The crowd breathed a sigh of relief and the announcer gave them a second to relax, but only a second and then the real show started. Instead of releasing his parachute the growing speck up there was pulling a bed sheet out of his leather jacket, shaking it in the wind currents caused by his earthward tumble. The crowd went wild. "Malfunction!" shouted the announcer. "Call an ambulance! Keep calm!" But the crowd needed no further prodding from the commentator. All eyes were straining skyward. In the split seconds involved those strained faces went through the whole horrible accident they fancied unfolding. His chute had collapsed. It would never open. He was getting nearer and nearer to earth. It was horrible, a helpless horror. They could do nothing to save him. Women screamed and fainted. Men turned away rather than see the awful end.

But Dan, who is remarkably aware of every movement around him, even when plummeting through space, was getting a big "charge" out of the whole affair. Just at the 500 foot elevation at which law requires stunt jumpers to pull their chutes, or maybe a little closer ("whose going to measure the altitude up there"), Dan pulled his rip cord and the wrinkled, old patched chute that had done the trick so many times before caught the wind, as if on signal, and billowed open. Dan floated to earth smiling at a very greatful and relieved crowd. For this stunt used to attract customers to the flying fields Dan was paid the large sum of ten dollars.

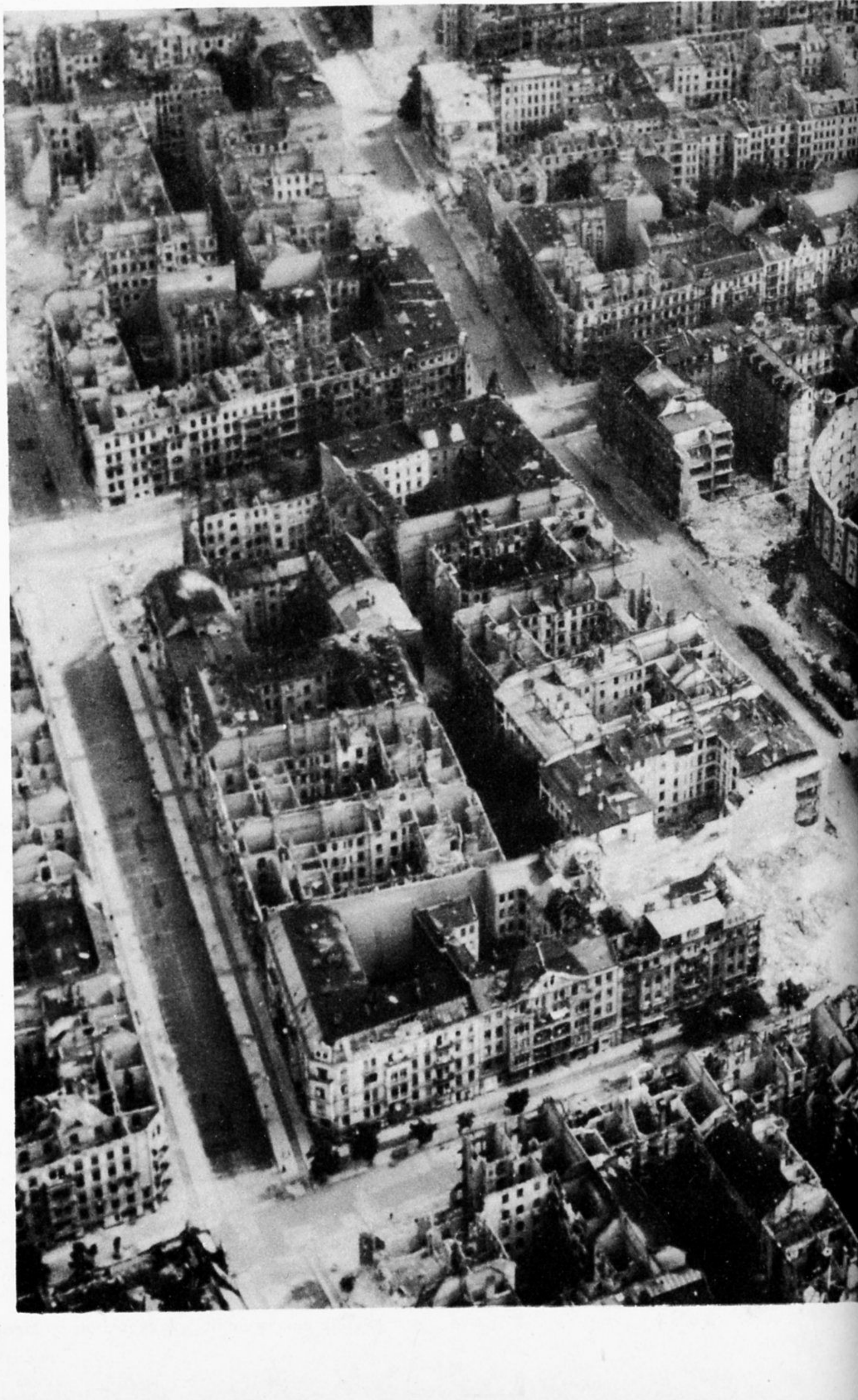
Four years later Dan was to use his army version of this same stunt for the betterment of international relations although strictly on his own and without the sanction of Uncle Sam.

Lt. General Tchepourkin, famous Russian Cossack General, was coming to our C. P. in Ludwigslust, Germany for a visit, and volunteers were selected to stage a jump. Cpl. Bost wasted no time in electing himself as one of those to make the General's visit a pleasant one. Bed sheets in this man's army have become as scarce as hot and cold running plumbing but only the malfunction drop would do and Dan was not to be denied even if it meant going feminine with a conficated lace window curtain. The wind was pretty high for jumping but something like a little wind wouldn't stop the Cossacks and it wasn't going to stop the jumpers regardless of the slight difference in methods of locomotion. The C-47 Dakotas, themselves veterans of several combat parachute and glider drops, came in over the field at two thousand feet and out came the volunteers. Most pulled their ripcords early, but not Bost. Trailing his lace curtain streamer, he hurdled earthward as the Russians anxiously sweated and then chalked him up for lost. Somewhere under 500 feet, the accepted safety limit, Dan threw away his streamer and pulled the ripcord. The billowing silk, not only caught him up just short of the ground, but his timing and windy calculation had been perfect. He landed more gently than any on the field.

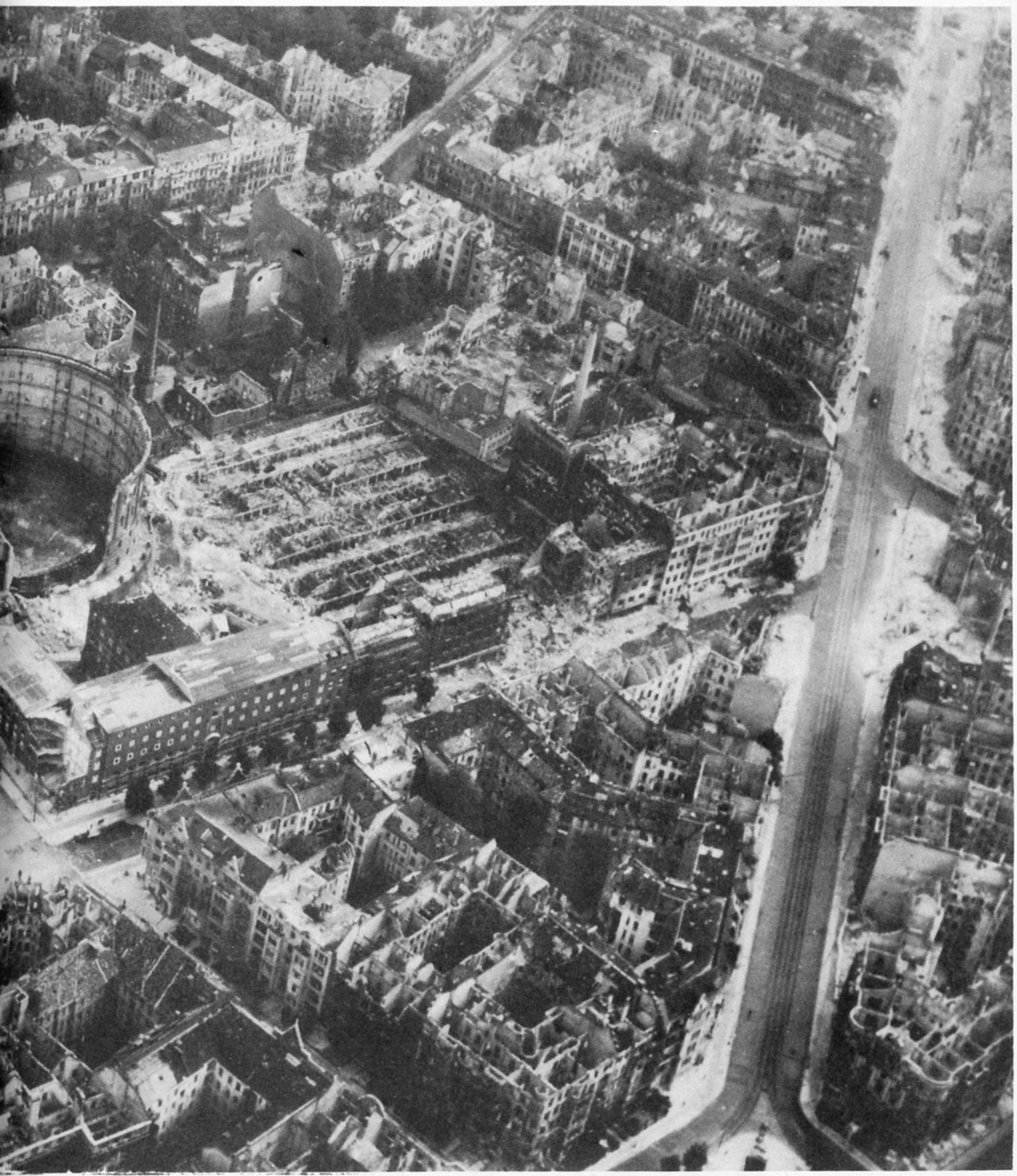
The Russians went wild. Even the "All Americans" who knew Dan's record, had sweated this one out, and while they couldn't openly show their anxiety (Veteran jumpers never do), they were as anxious as the Russians about that final opening. General Tchepourkin ran out on the field to greet the brave American. The bashful Bost, still stepping out of his harness, was overwhelmed. The famous Russian General kissed him on both checks, and pinned his own Russian Guards medal on Dan's jump jacket. The medal, awarded for bravery and excellence, was the first awarded to an 82nd trooper by the Russians. It was but a fitting climax to top the exciting career of a man whose courage, daring, and keenness are outstanding, even among the veterans of the "devils with baggy pants."


A medal and a kiss was the Russian's response to Dan's brave feat.

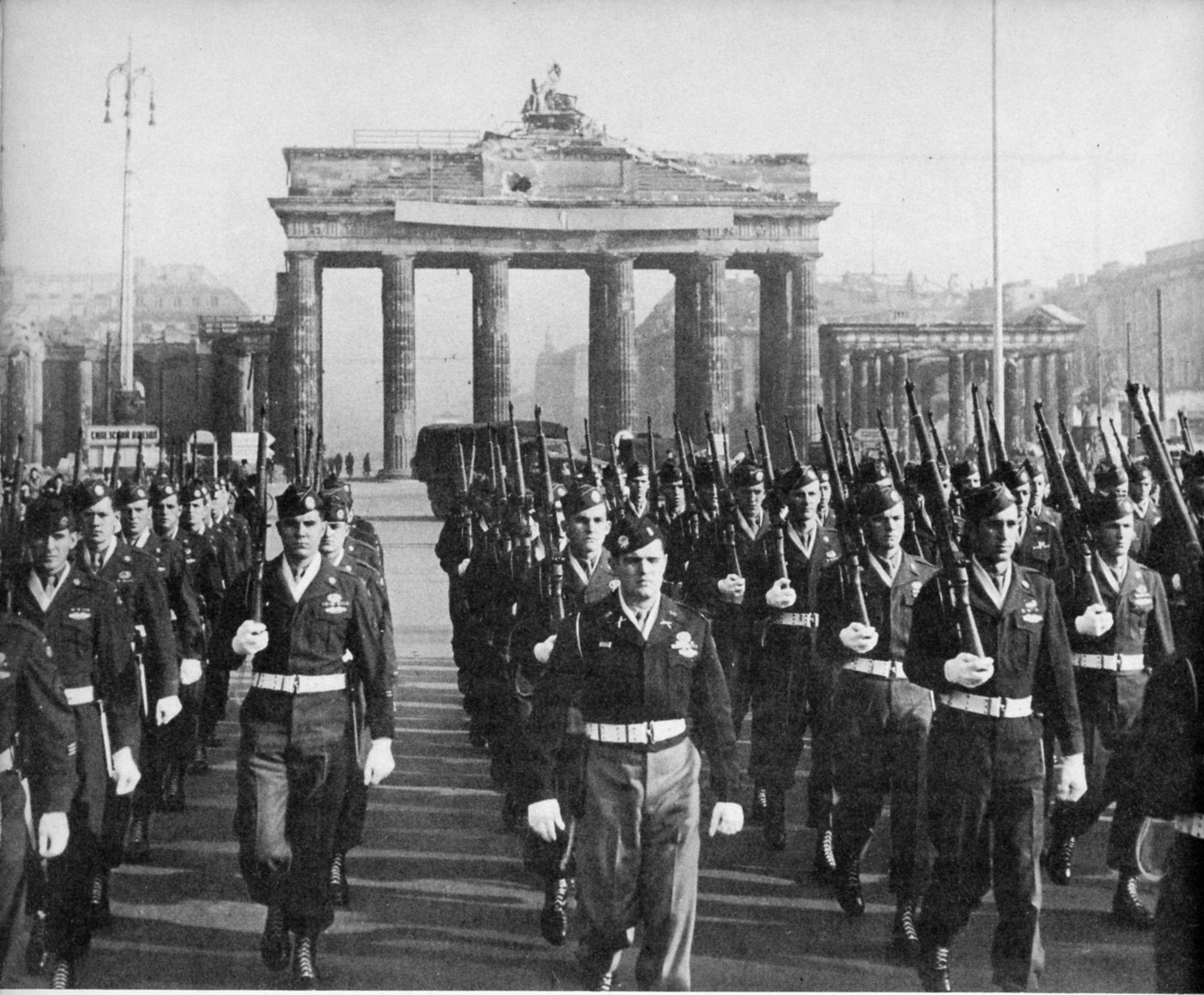
Berlin



a roofless symbol of a ruthless order



"No enemy bomb will ever drop on German soil."—Hermann Goering.



The "All American" Honor Guard parades before the Brandenburg Gate—Berlin 1945.

82nd—America's Honor Guard in Berlin

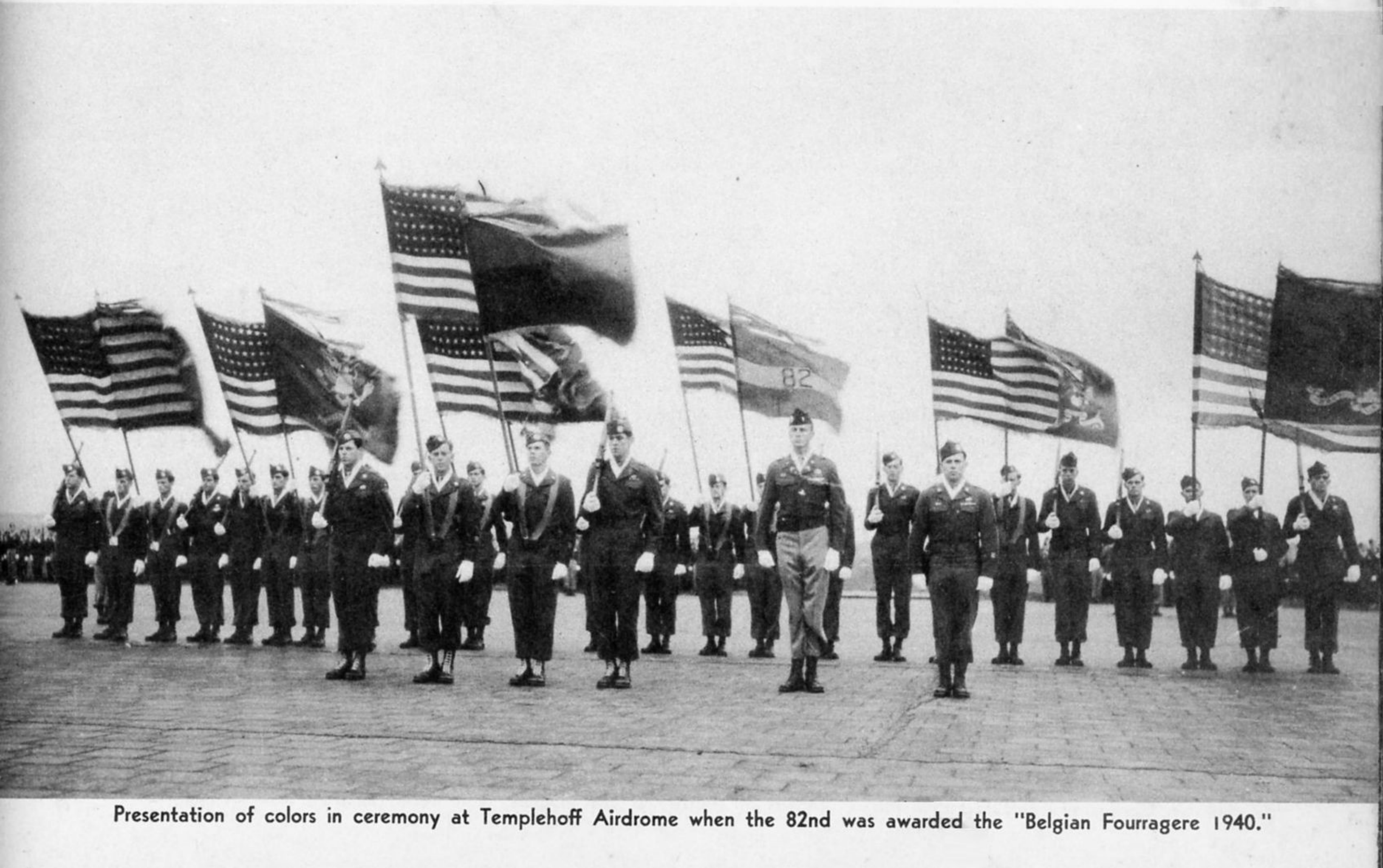
BERLIN was still chaos and confusion when the Eighty-second arrived in July, 1945 to take over the task of policing and patrolling the American sector of the city. Despite ruined buildings and a defeated Nazi Empire, Berlin was probably the most cosmopolitan of the international capitals in the postwar world. Here in the remains of the once proud German capital military and civil authorities mixed with scientific observers, politicians, entertainers and the fourth estate from virtually all of the United Nations. Answers to the secrets of the beaten German war machine were to be found in the capital. Here also 4 great powers divided responsibility for government and put into practice their own theories about reconversion of Germany as a potential democracy. Resources were low and had to be rationed and allocated where they would do the most good. But most important of all Berlin had to be completely stripped of ex-Nazis and any potential military threat.

Protecting and developing American interests in this city of international intrigue was the Eighty-second Airborne Division. The troopers known in combat as the "Devils in the Baggy Pants" had to retain their readiness for action but they now must also be "America's Honor Guard" in Berlin. White bootlaces and scarves were carved from Parachute shrouds and silk. White gloves, and cromium bayonets were added and the Eighty-second in full dress was on guard in Berlin. Administration was smoothed out, German civilians were lined in queue, and the Eighty-second settled down to enjoyable and profitable months learning the ways of other peoples while guarding, parading, and receiving dignitaries by the score.

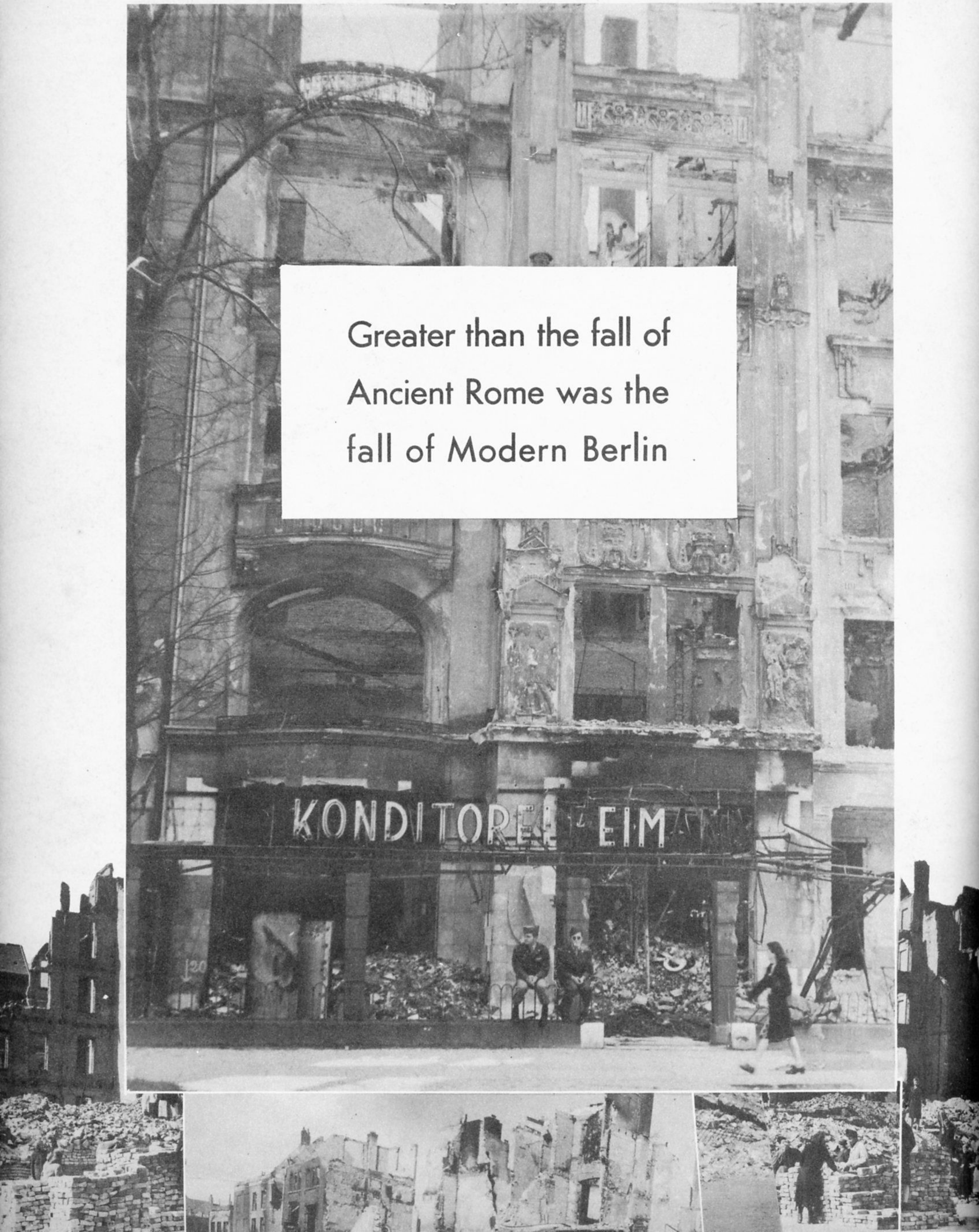
"IN ALL MY YEARS IN THE ARMY AND OF ALL THE HONOR GUARDS I'VE EVER SEEN, THE 82nd BERLIN HONOR GUARD IS THE BEST."

General George S. Patton

V-J DAY, 1945



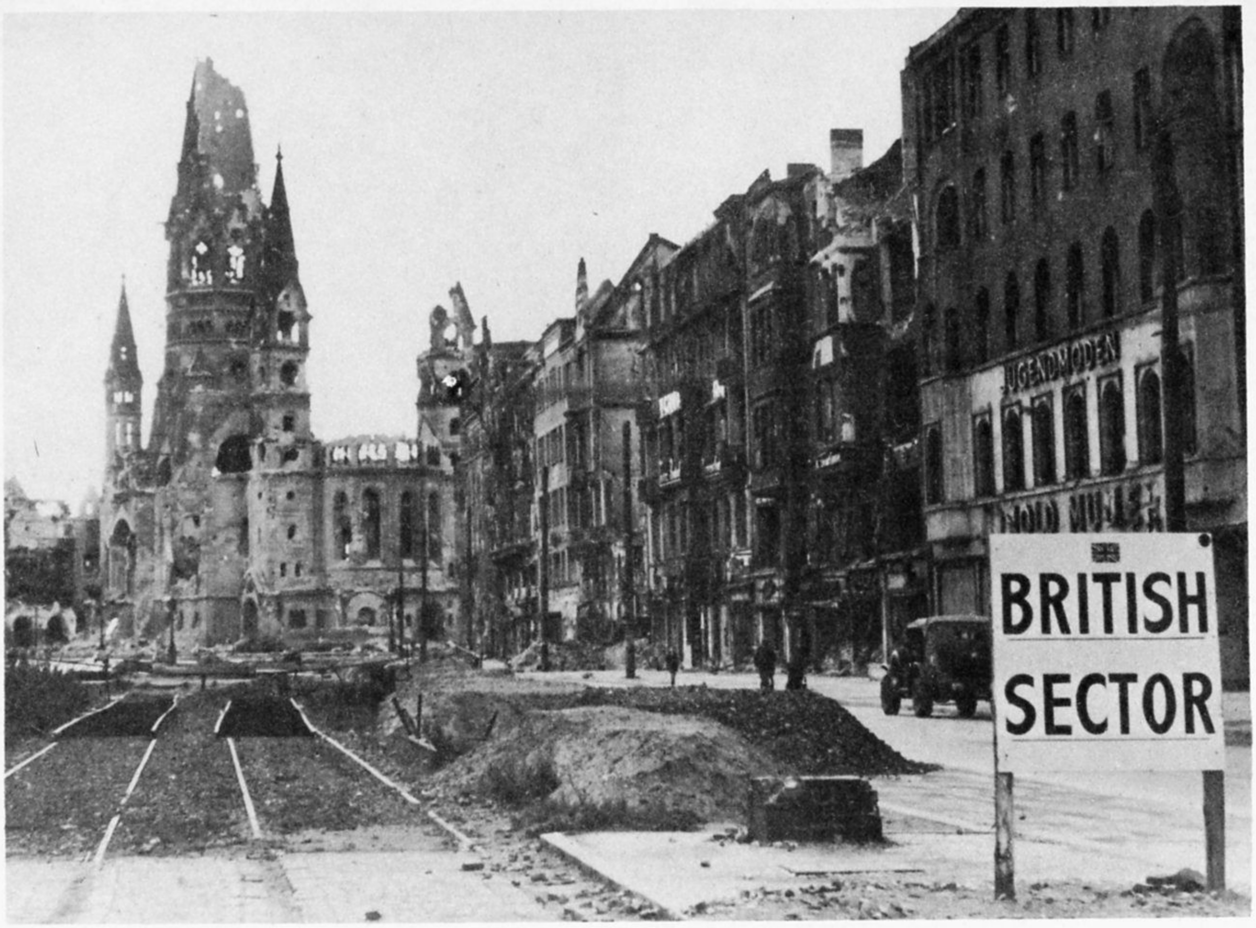
Presentation of colors in ceremony at Templehoff Airdrome when the 82nd was awarded the "Belgian Fourragere 1940."


KONDITOREI EIM

Greater than the fall of
Ancient Rome was the
fall of Modern Berlin

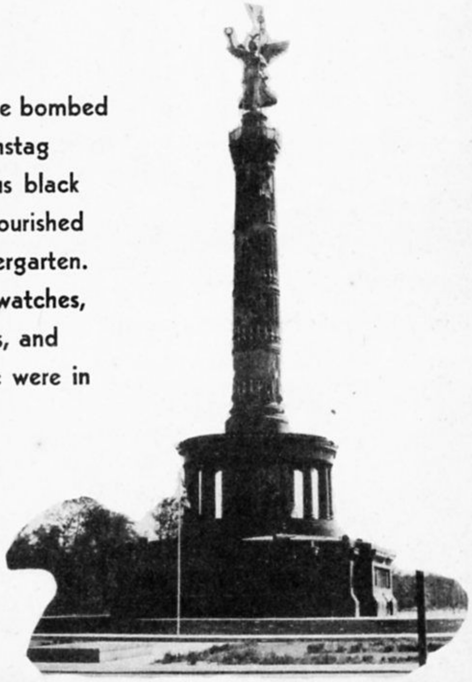
Kurfürstendamm
ADOLF MI

A BERLIN TOUR



Just inside the British sector of Berlin was the Kaiser church.

Left—
Behind the bombed out Reichstag a fabulous black market flourished in the Tiergarten. Jewelry, watches, cigarettes, and chocolate were in demand.



The French Tricolor flies over Bismarck's victory column symbol of German victory in the Franco-Prussian War.

Americans walk through ancient Brandenberg separating the British and Russian sector.

Jesting on Hitler's Balcony.

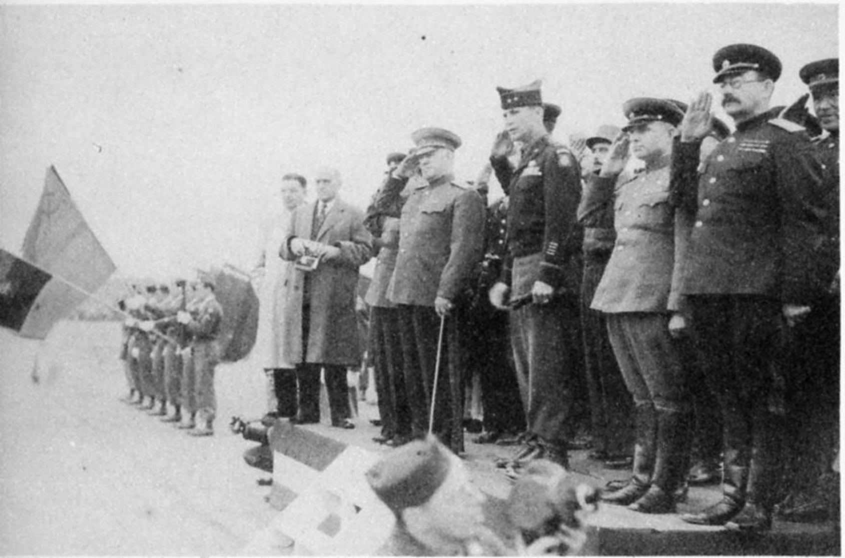
The trees blow no more on Unter den Linden.

Hitler's Berlin home had air conditioning courtesy U .S. 8th AF.

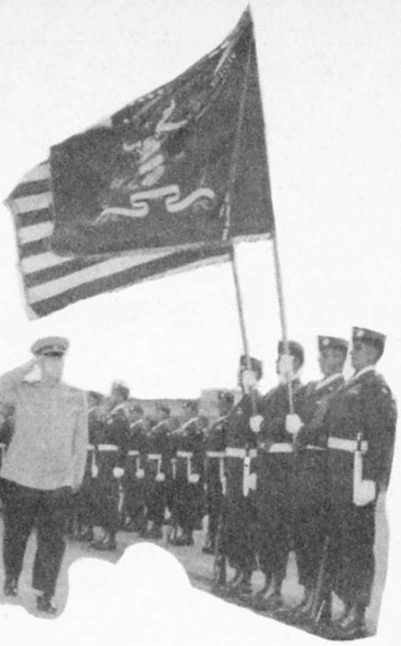
The Sports Palast

Many fine statues stood unscarred by bombs in down town Berlin.

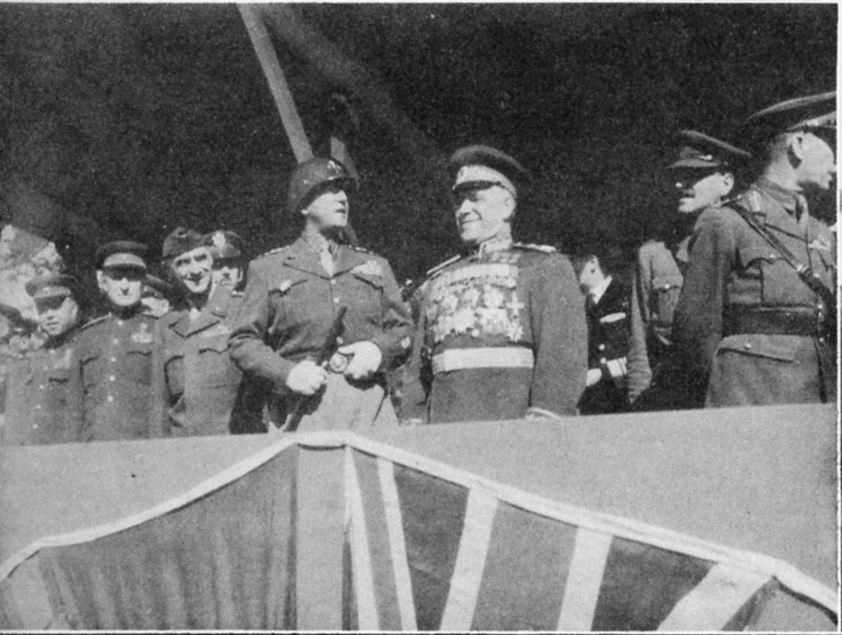
Congressmen—Diplomats—Soldiers
The 82nd was their Host in Berlin



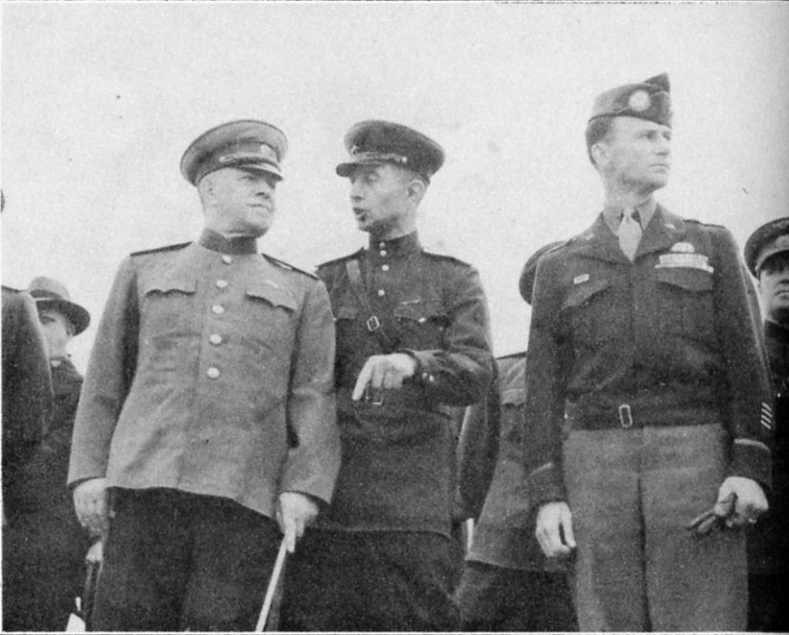
U. S. Congressmen and Russian generals watched the 82nd do its stuff in Berlin.



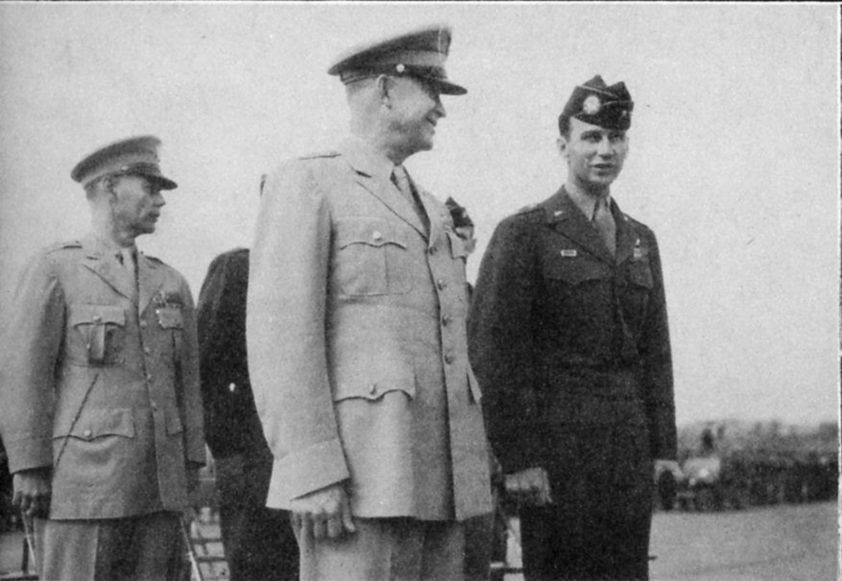
Eisenhower and Zhukov salute our colors.



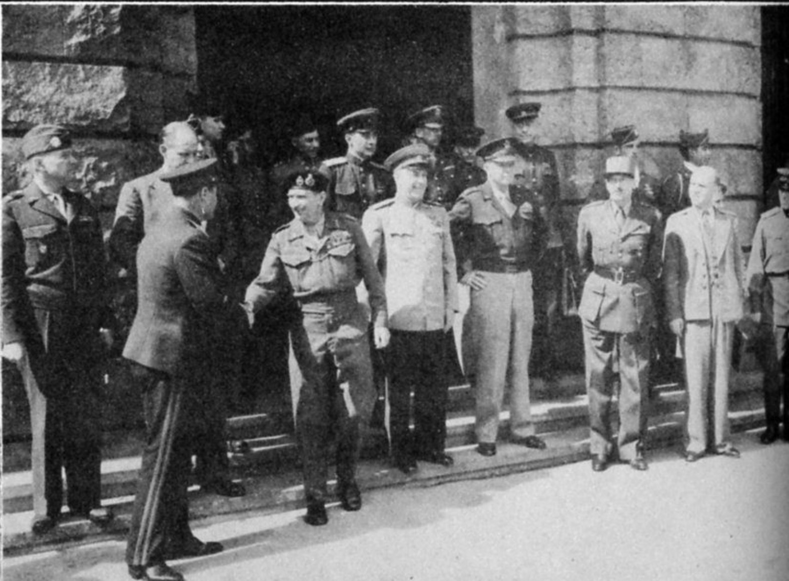
Patton, Zhukov at Allied V-J Day parade.



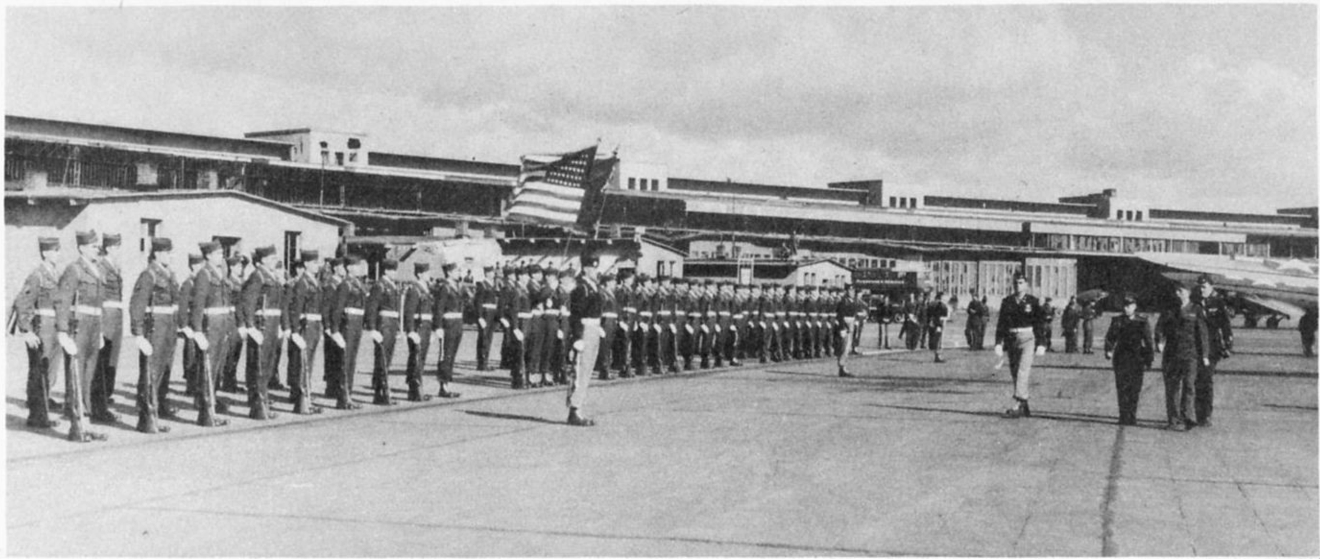
Zhukov and Gavin at Templehoff review.



Eisenhower and Gavin watch a training jump at Templehoff.



Flag raising ceremony at the Komandatura brought out 4 power Supreme Commanders.



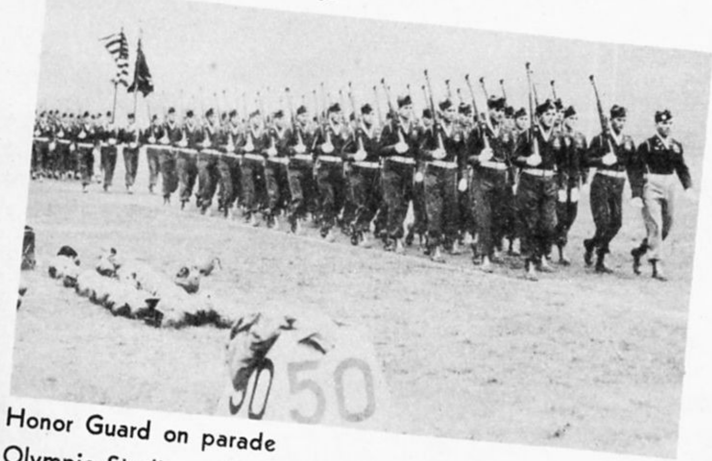
The Eighty-second honor guard met visiting celebrities at Templehoff Airdrome.

The Belgian Minister of National Defense presented the Belgian Fourragere 1940 to the 82nd in a royal order.

Ike and Slim Jim explain the technical points of Airborne warfare to American Congressmen.

The Dutch War Minister presented the Willems Ord to the Division an unprecedented ceremony.

The suburban Steiglitz—the 82nd Division command post.



Honor Guard on parade Olympic Stadium—Berlin.

Russo-American horse play in the tiergarten.

Royal Dutchman Smithers and Schmidt are honored for their role at Nijmegen a year before.

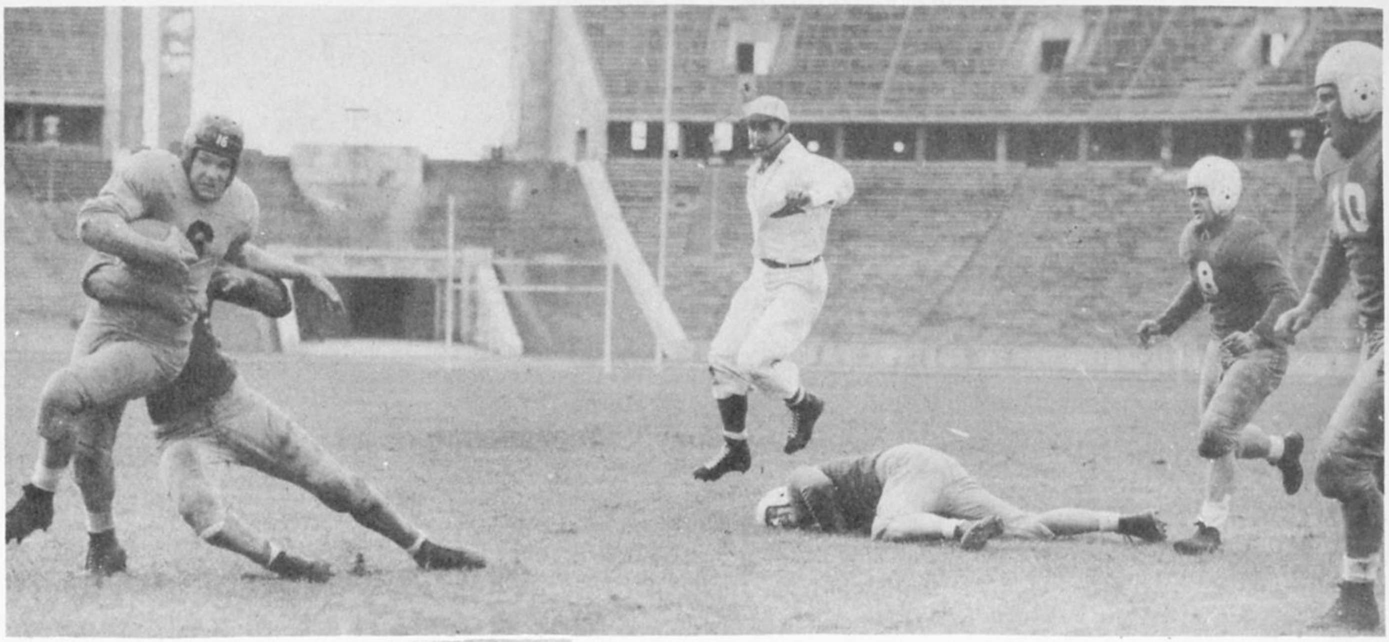
MILITAERREGIERUNG — DEUT
GESETZ Nr. 2

Barter was the keynote and ads for everything could be found posted with military government order.

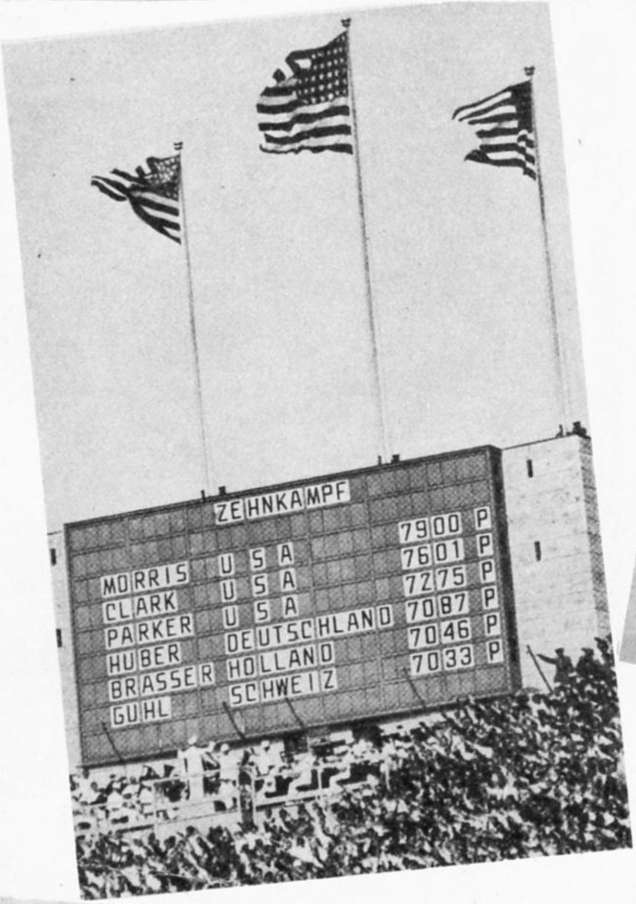
AIRBORNE
AA
THE "ALL AMERICAN" PARAGLIDE
21st GERMAN ARMY SURRENDERS TO 82nd DIVISION
82nd ELBE BRIDGEHEAD LAST IN EUROPE

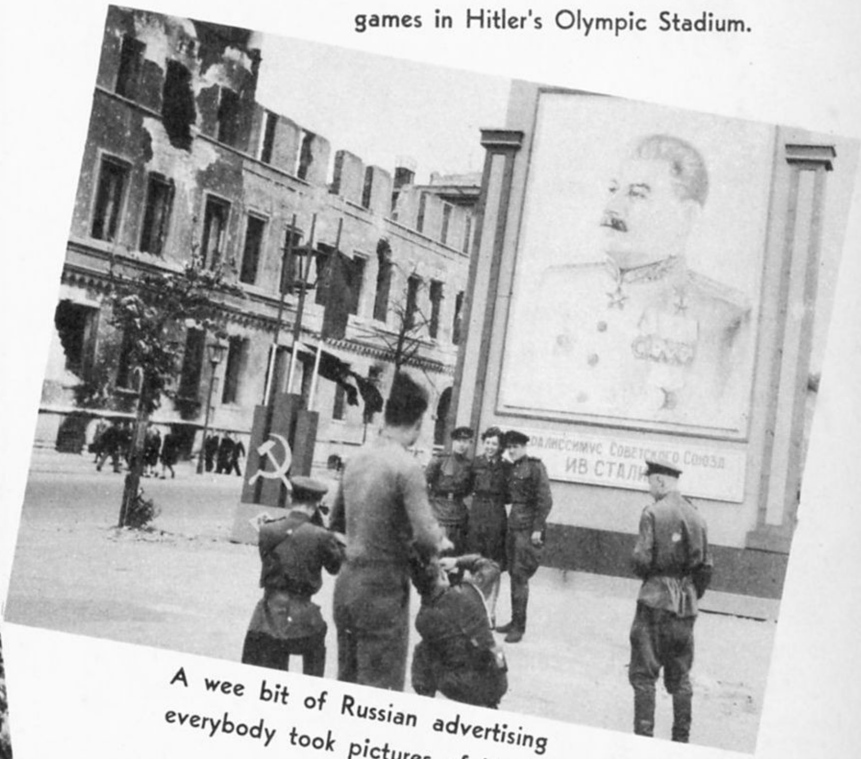
Dogfaces of the Eighty-second read the Paraglide—Europe's biggest newspaper.

The Parade of Champions—The U. S. team at the international allied games was 1/2 Eighty-second.



The 82nd played all home football games in Hitler's Olympic Stadium.


ZEHNKAMPF
MORRIS USA 7900 P
CLARK USA 7601 P
PARKER USA 7275 P
HUBER DEUTSCHLAND 7087 P
BRASSER HOLLAND 7046 P
GUHL SCHWEIZ 7033 P



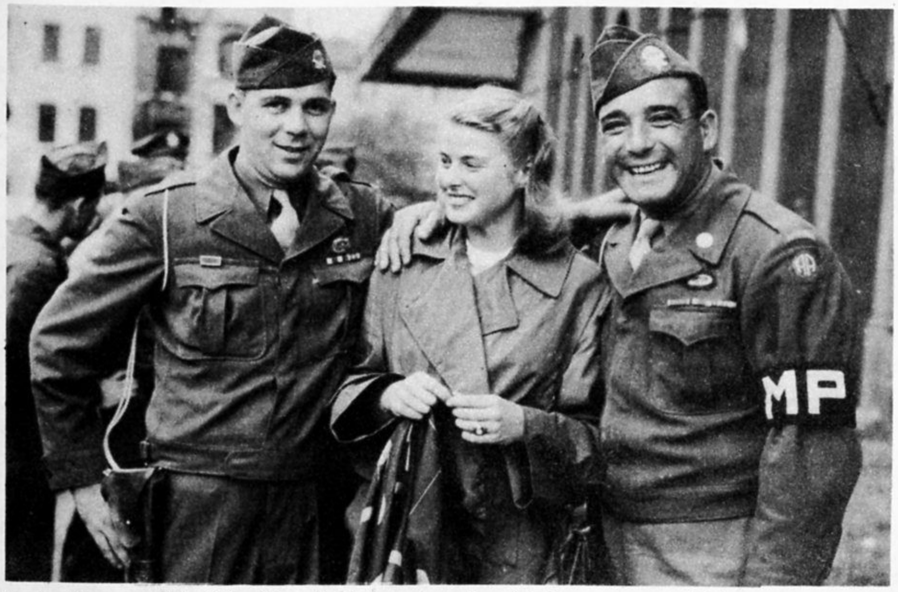
A wee bit of Russian advertising everybody took pictures of Uncle Joe.

Hungry German children picked the garbage out of G. I. mess kits.

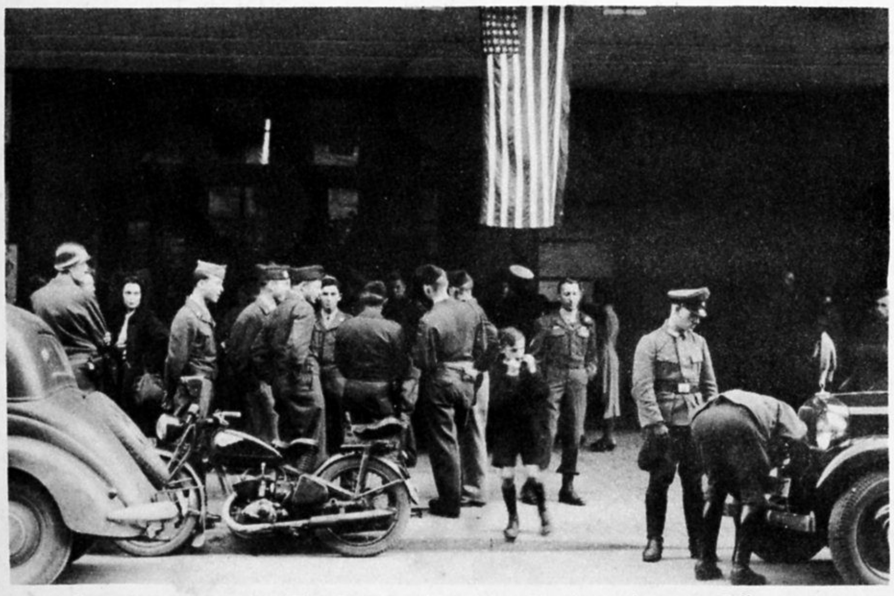
The first Russian tank to enter Berlin.

Captain Paterson greets Bob Hope in Berlin as he had in Africa over 2 years before.

German Tallent was commandeered for the Division's own night club circuit.



Protection — M. P.'s Guard their prize, Ingrid Bergman, outside Titania.



German Police raid "The Femina Club" for Black Marketeers. Billy Wilder and a bunch of troopers look on.

82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION
AIRBORNE
AA
HEADQUARTERS

Academy award winning Director Billy Wilder enjoyed a lost weekend in Berlin with the 82nd.

ENTERTAINMENT

A few lucky troopers met Jack Benny, Ingrid Bergman and Martha Tilton. All had an opportunity to see them perform at Titania Palast.

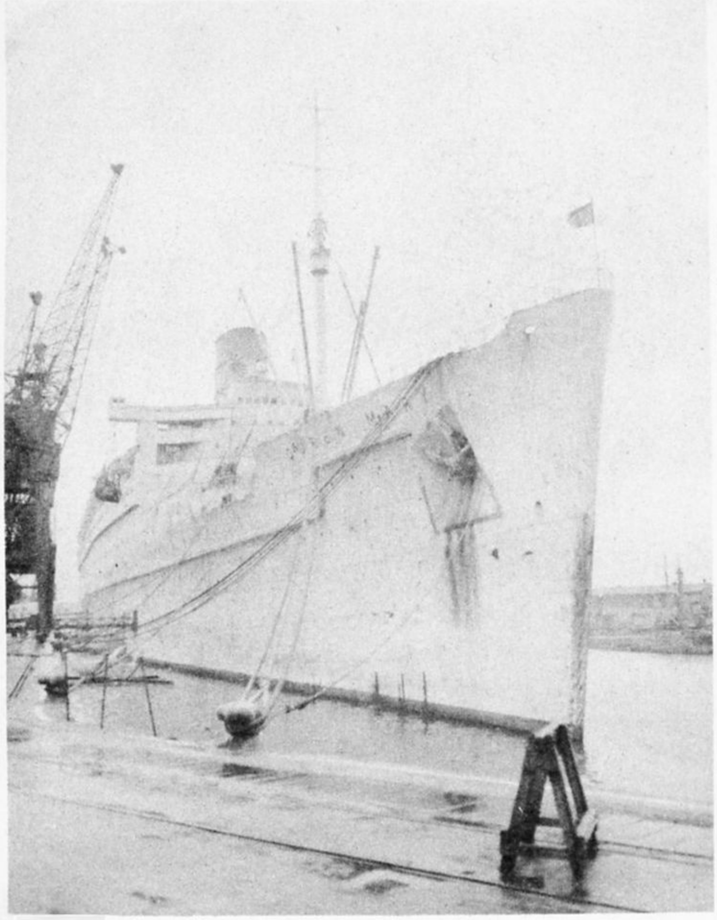
Ella Logan is given another shoulder patch for her coat of many colors.

Lucky Guide — Trooper Sanders takes Trouper's Adler, Bergman, and Tilton on a tour of Berlin.

HOME

JANUARY 3RD AND THE L'I'L OL' LADY

HOME ON THE QUEEN



Southampton — Last foothold on foreign soil.

On board we adopted triplets—the real father was in South Bend.

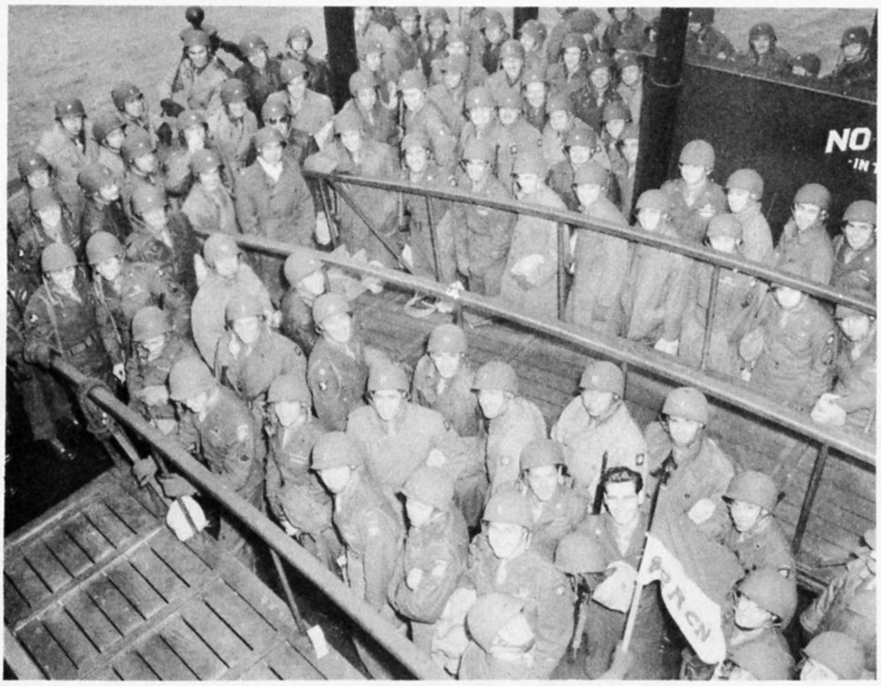
For some it had been three years and seven campaigns but as sure as the "queen" would stay afloat. This was ridin' home in style.

82nd AIRBORNE
325 GLI
HELLO AMERICA

NEW YORK . . .

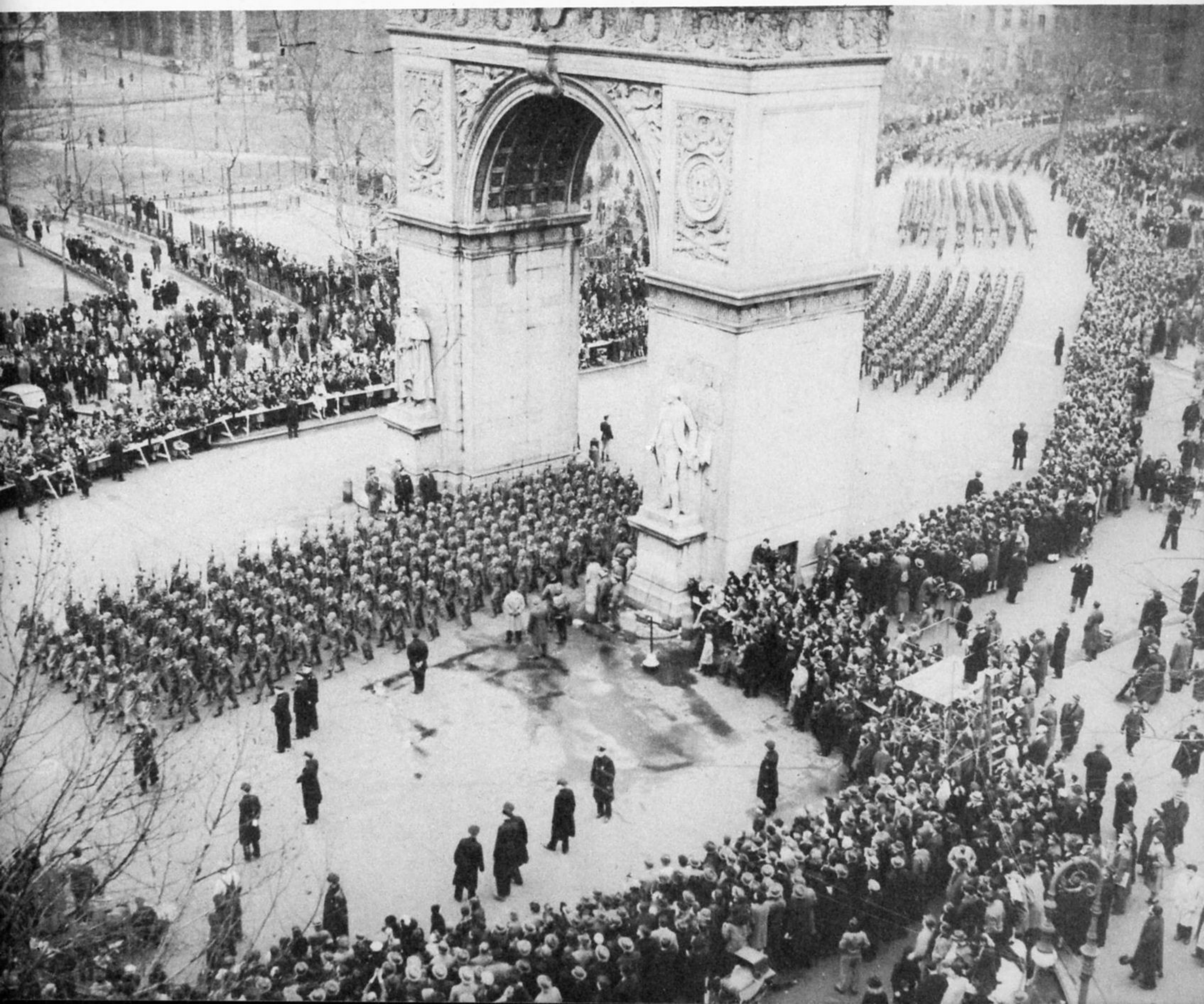
. . . AND AMERICAN GIRLS!

Mayor O'Dwyer inspects the honor guard in New York Harbor.

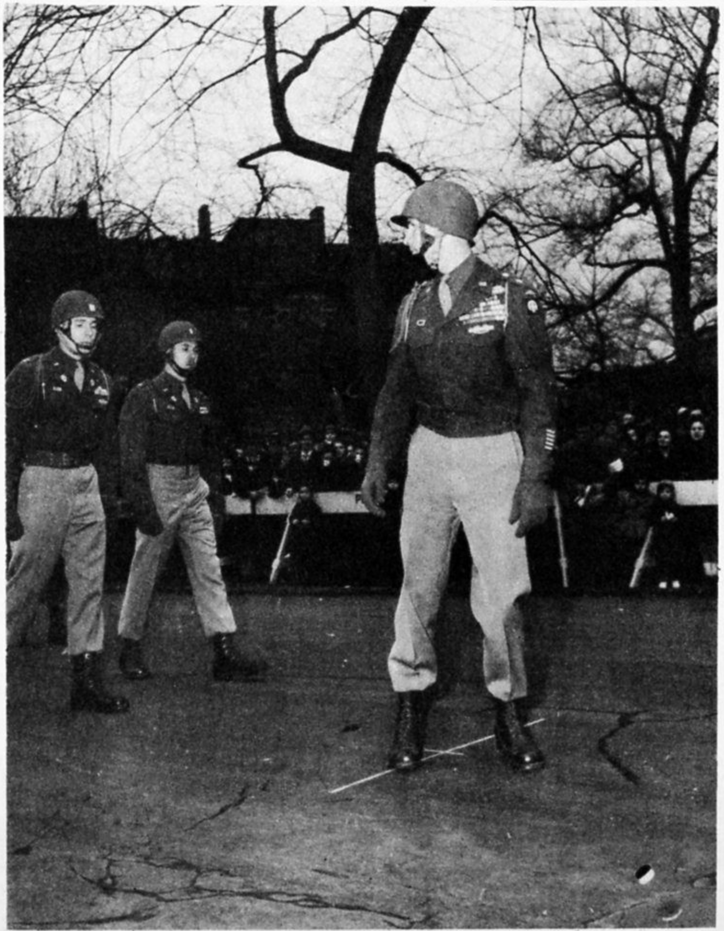


The ferry arriving from Camp Shanks.

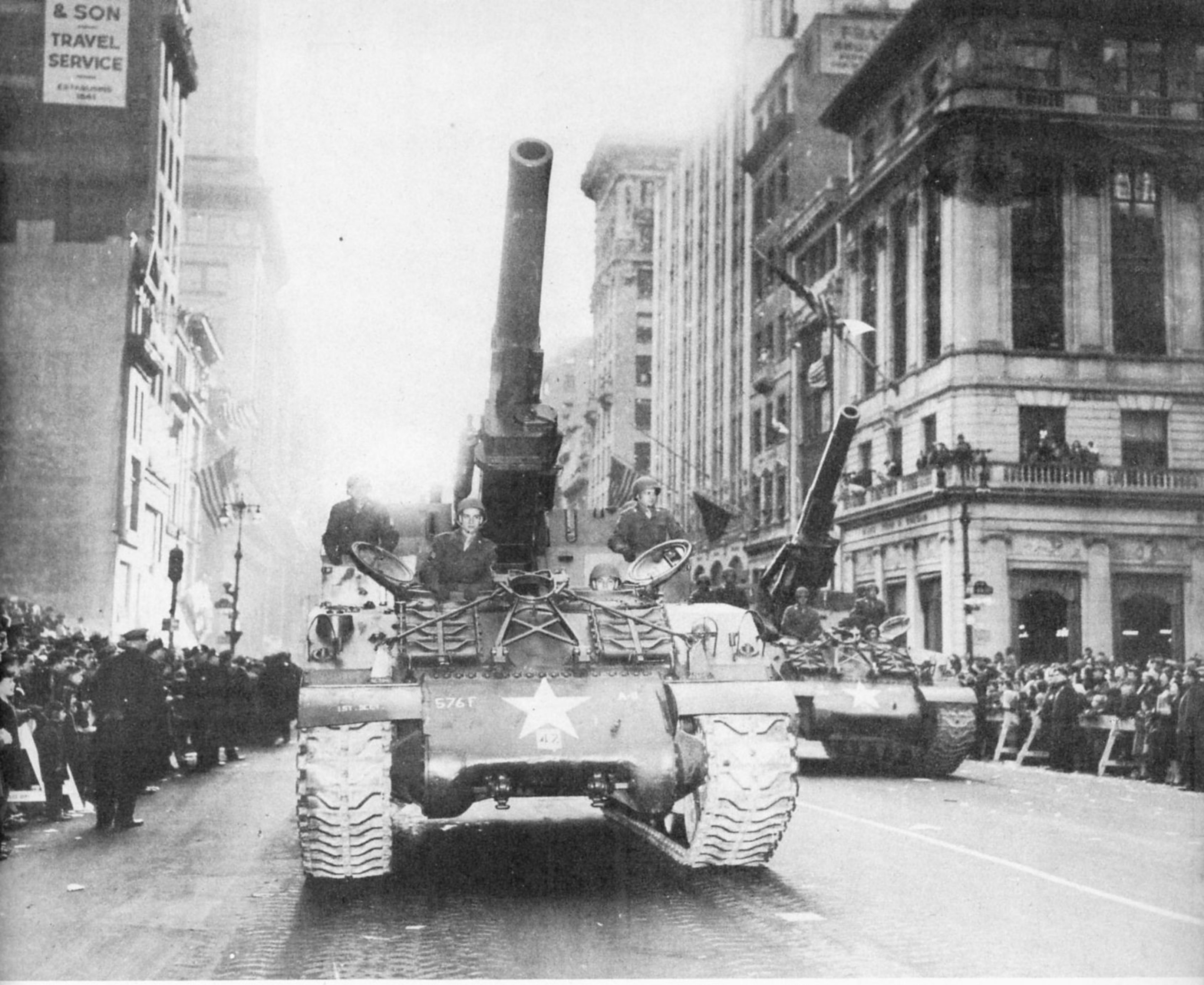
AND THEN THE GREATEST DAY OF ALL



Slim Jim leads his men...

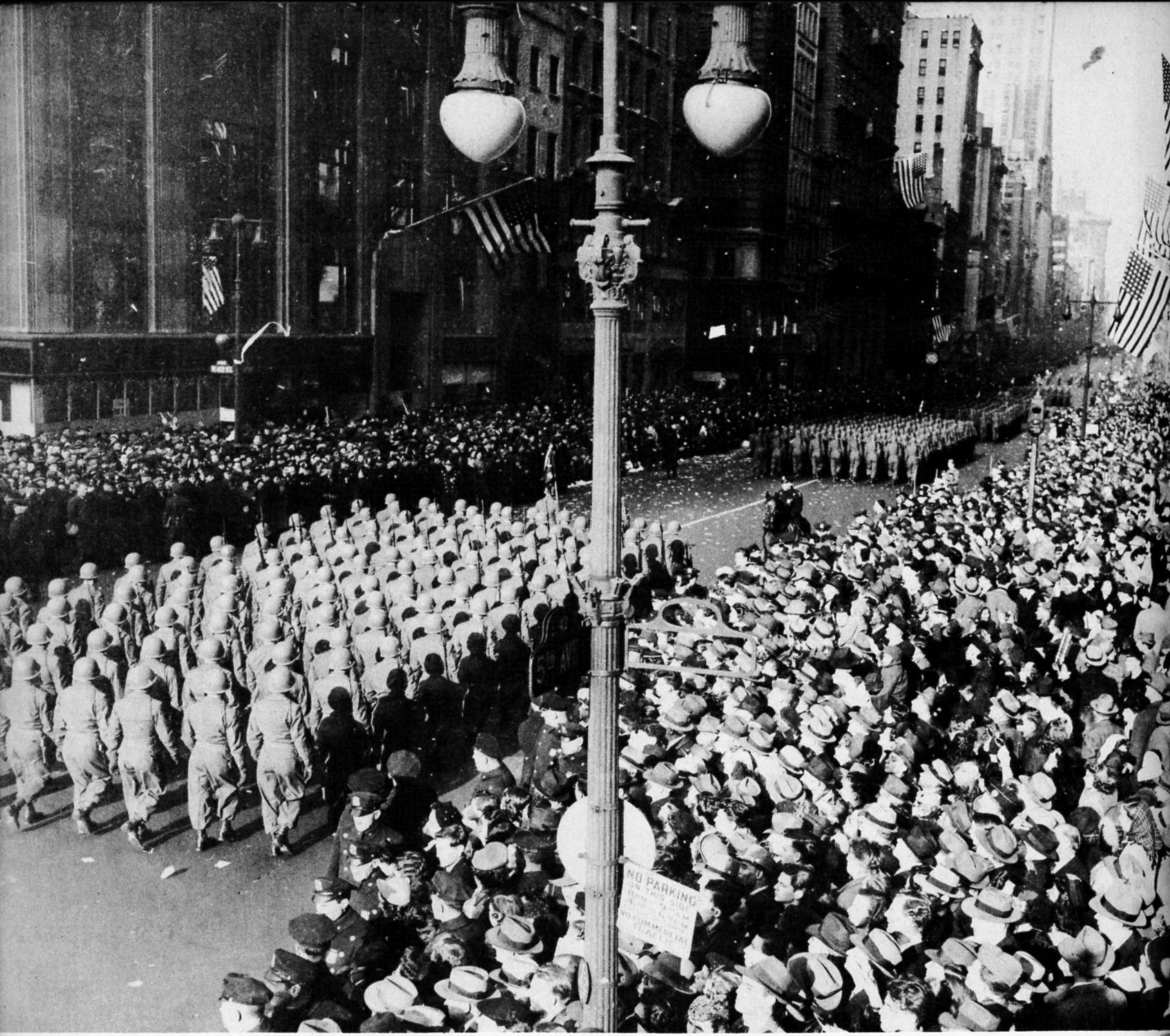


and looks for more...


& SON
TRAVEL
SERVICE
576F

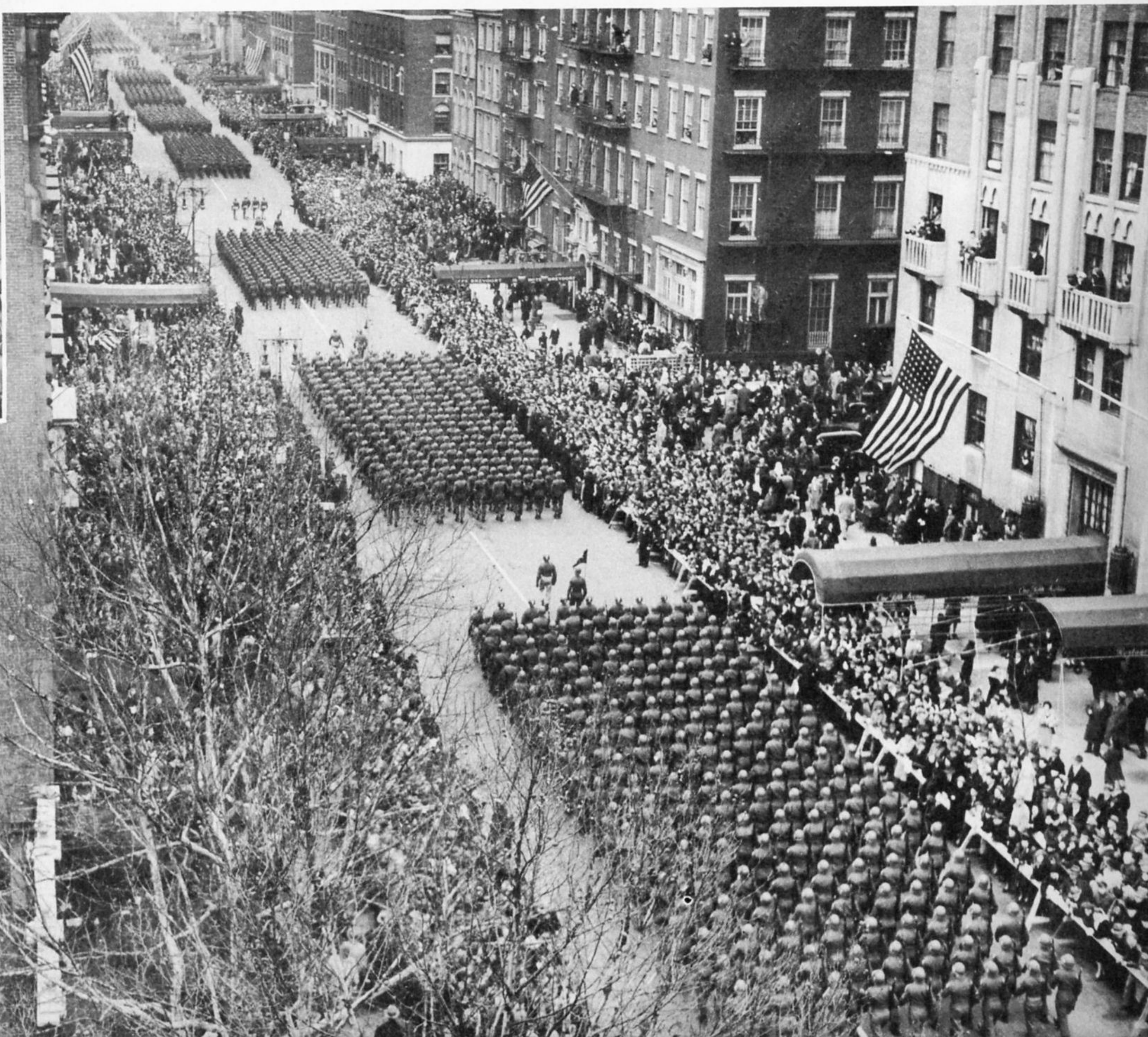
Tanks and the big stuff followed...

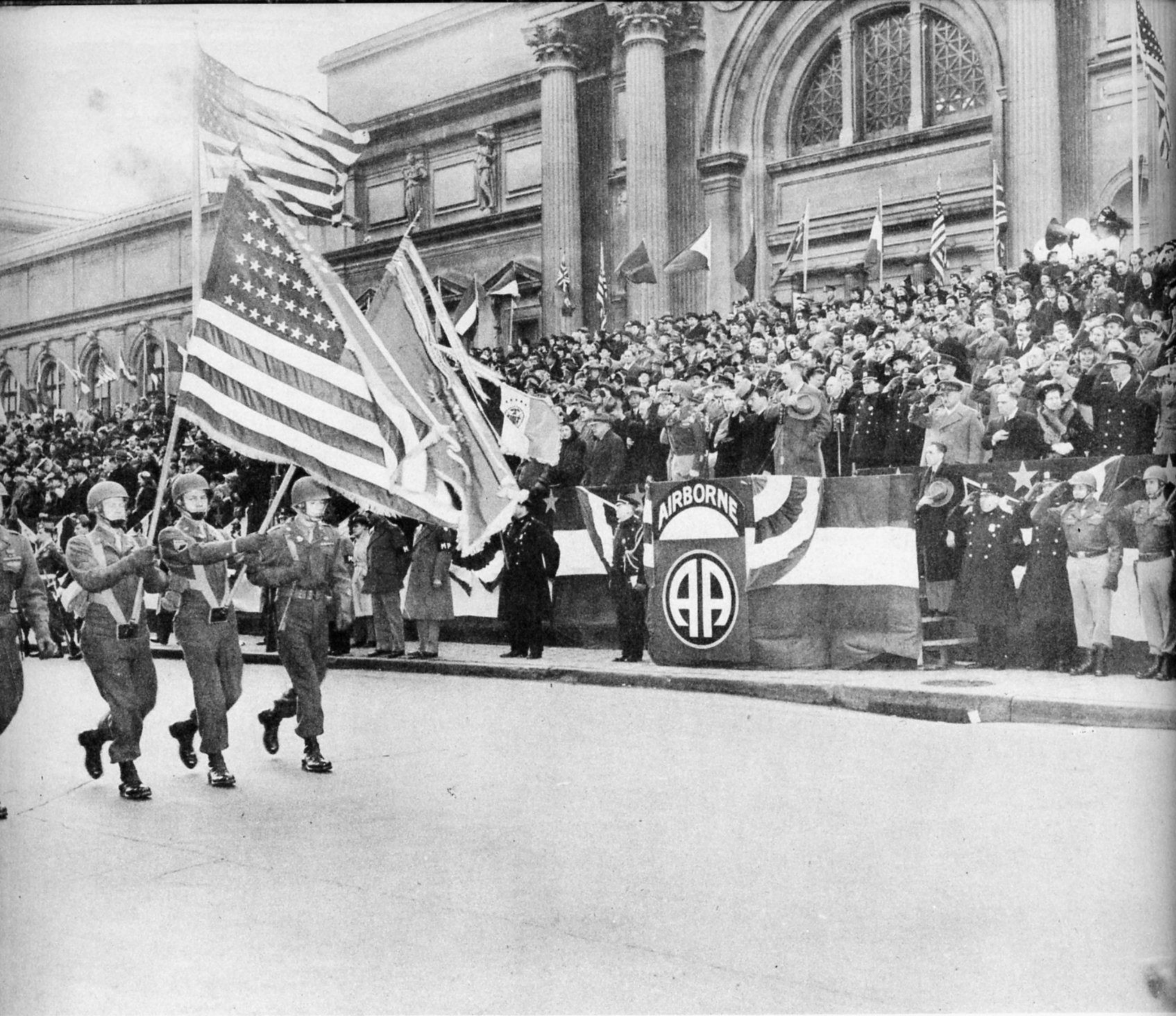
As Gen. Gavin joined old 82nd'er —Gen. Jonathan Wainwright with Grover Whalen, Mayor O'Dwyer, Gov. Dewey and Under-Secretary of War Royall.


5th AV
NO PARKING
ON THIS SIDE
NO COMMERCIAL
TRAFFIC

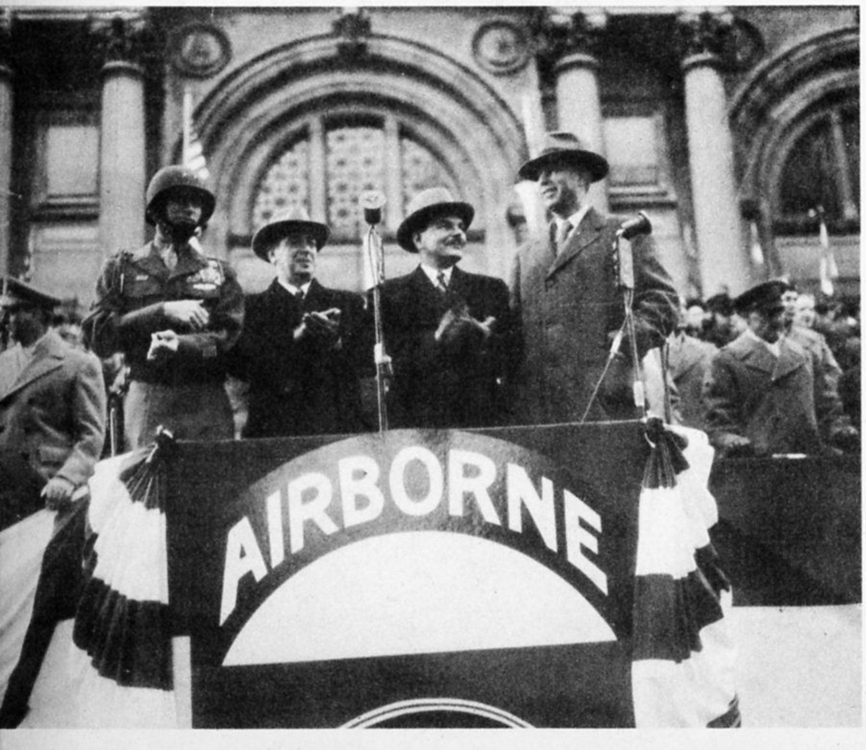
Down the avenue---

---and through the throng




AIRBORNE
AA

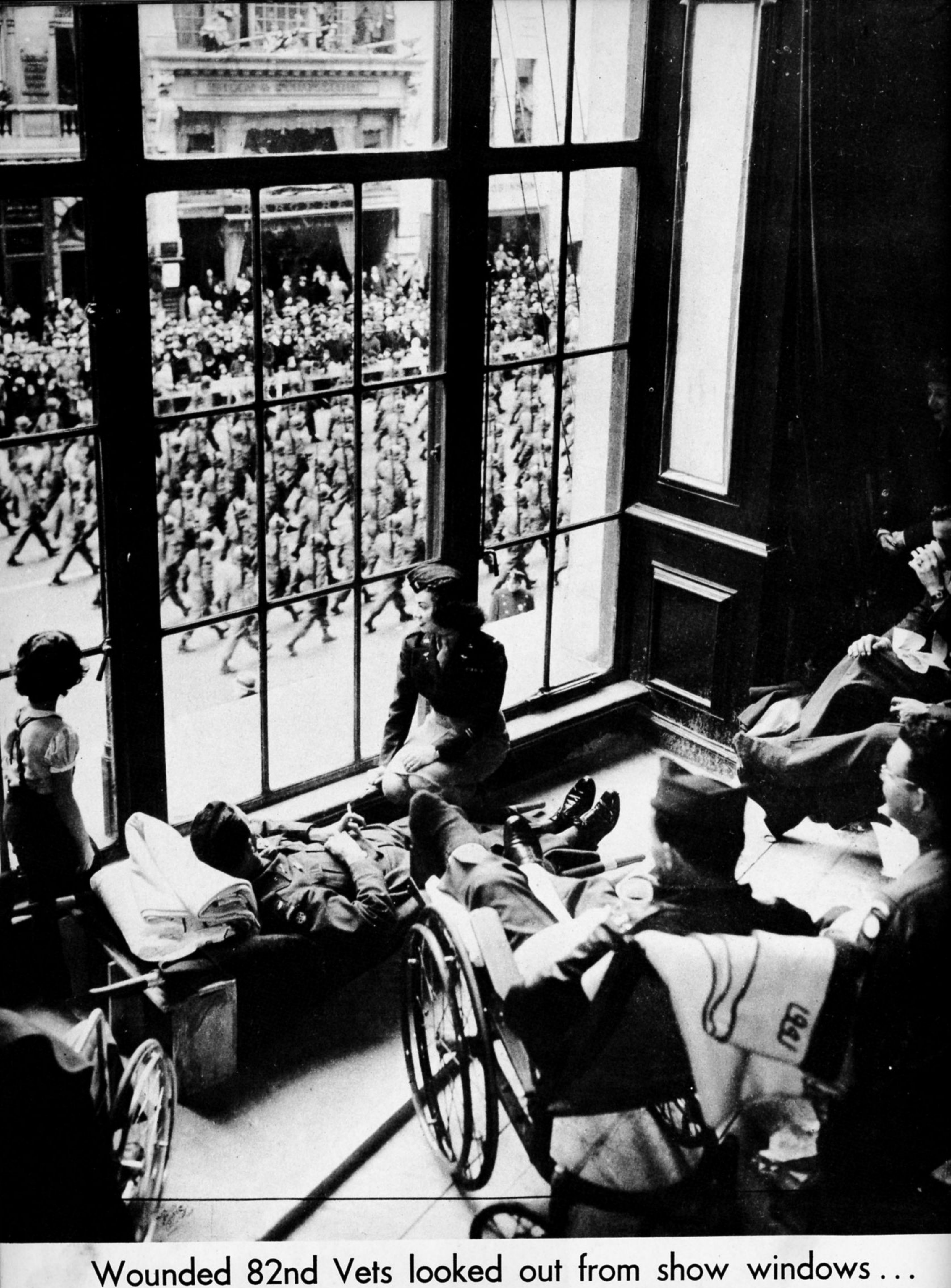
Old Glory Passes the Reviewing Stand . . .



. . . where Gavin, O'Dwyer, Dewey and Royall take the salute.

(opposite page)

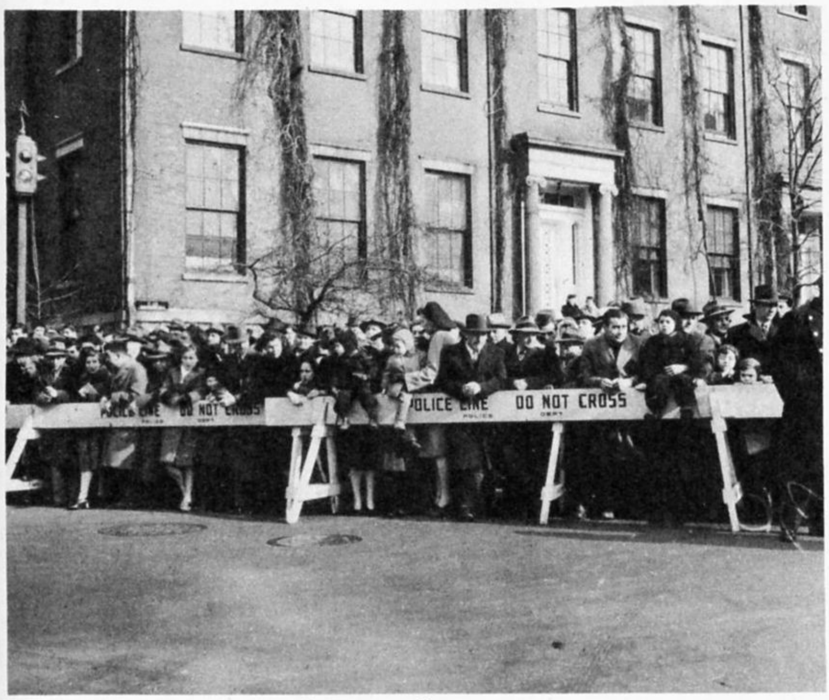
SANDWICH, MISTER?
The Spoils of Victory



Wounded 82nd Vets looked out from show windows . . .

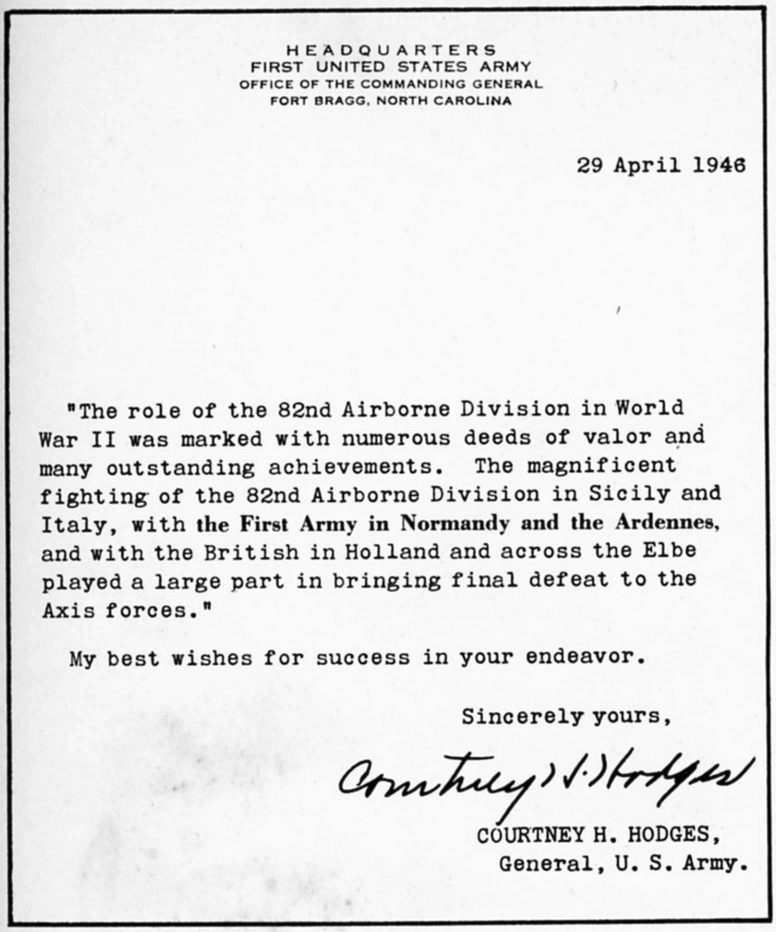
82nd Str
WELCOMES
82 AIRBORNE

Above left—Newsreel cameras were everywhere. 82nd St. adopted us even as had Nijmegen, Holland. Above — Marching men as far as the eye could see.


POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS
POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

The crowds were happy and so were we . . .

While some of our more able veterans climbed trees to get a better view . . .



HEADQUARTERS
FIRST UNITED STATES ARMY
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA

29 April 1946

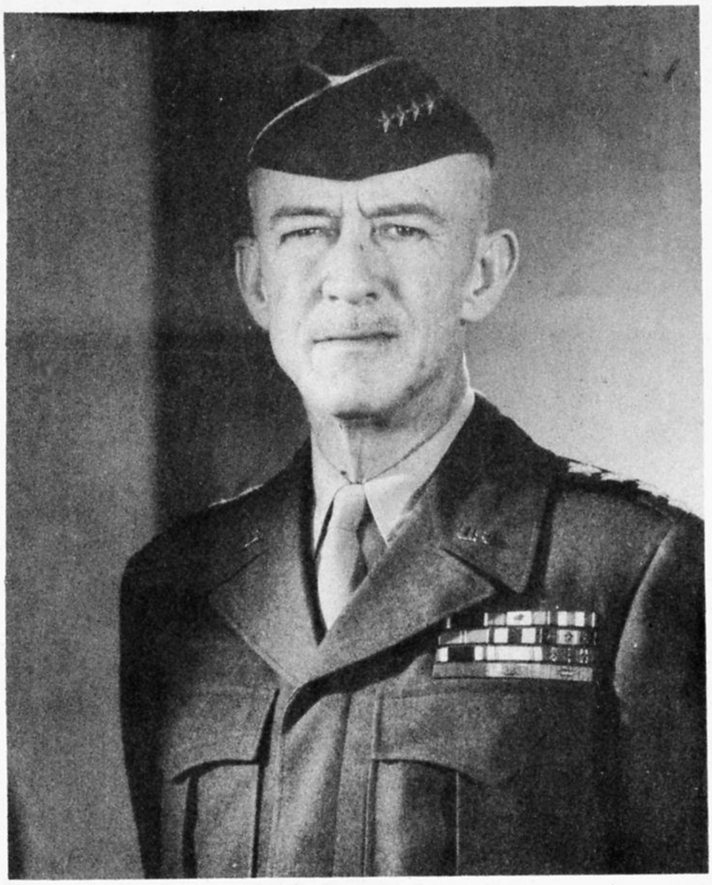
"The role of the 82nd Airborne Division in World War II was marked with numerous deeds of valor and many outstanding achievements. The magnificent fighting of the 82nd Airborne Division in Sicily and Italy, with **the First Army in Normandy and the Ardennes,** and with the British in Holland and across the Elbe played a large part in bringing final defeat to the Axis forces."

My best wishes for success in your endeavor.

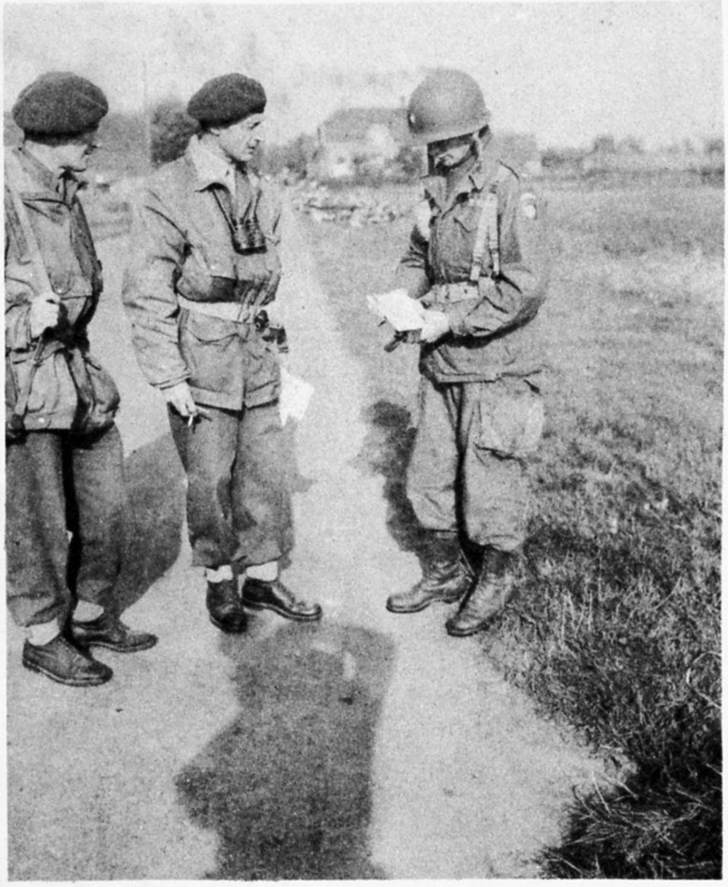
Sincerely yours,

Courtney H. Hodges

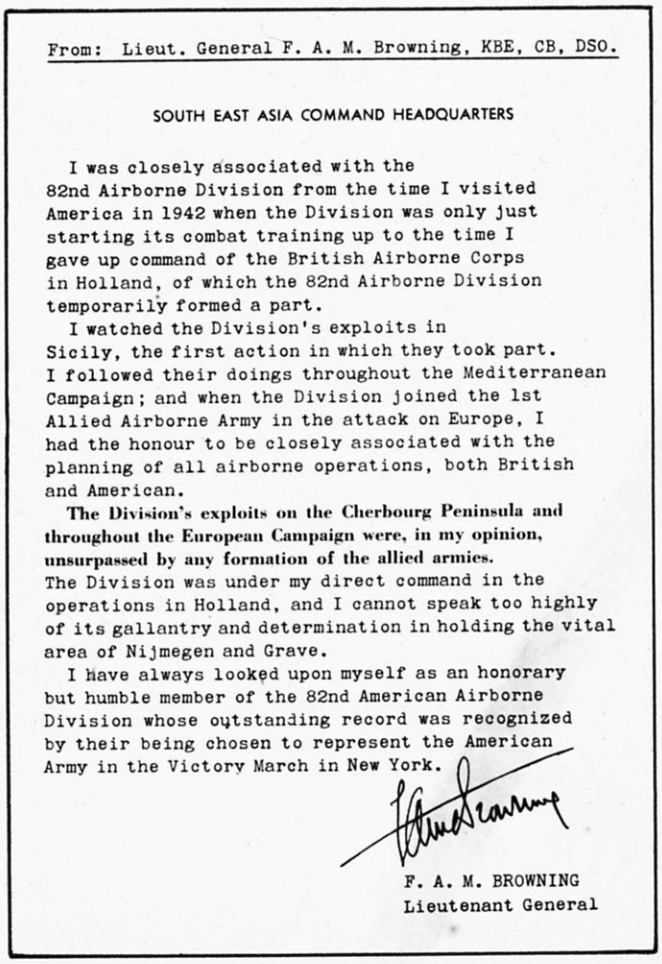
COURTNEY H. HODGES,
General, U. S. Army.



General Courtney H. Hodges, under whose First Army the 82nd fought in Normandy and the Ardennes.



British Parachute Corps Commander, Lt. Gen. F. A. M. Browning, KBE, CB, DSO, discusses the situation with Brig. Gen. Gavin shortly after the Allied landings in Holland.



From: Lieut. General F. A. M. Browning, KBE, CB, DSO.

SOUTH EAST ASIA COMMAND HEADQUARTERS

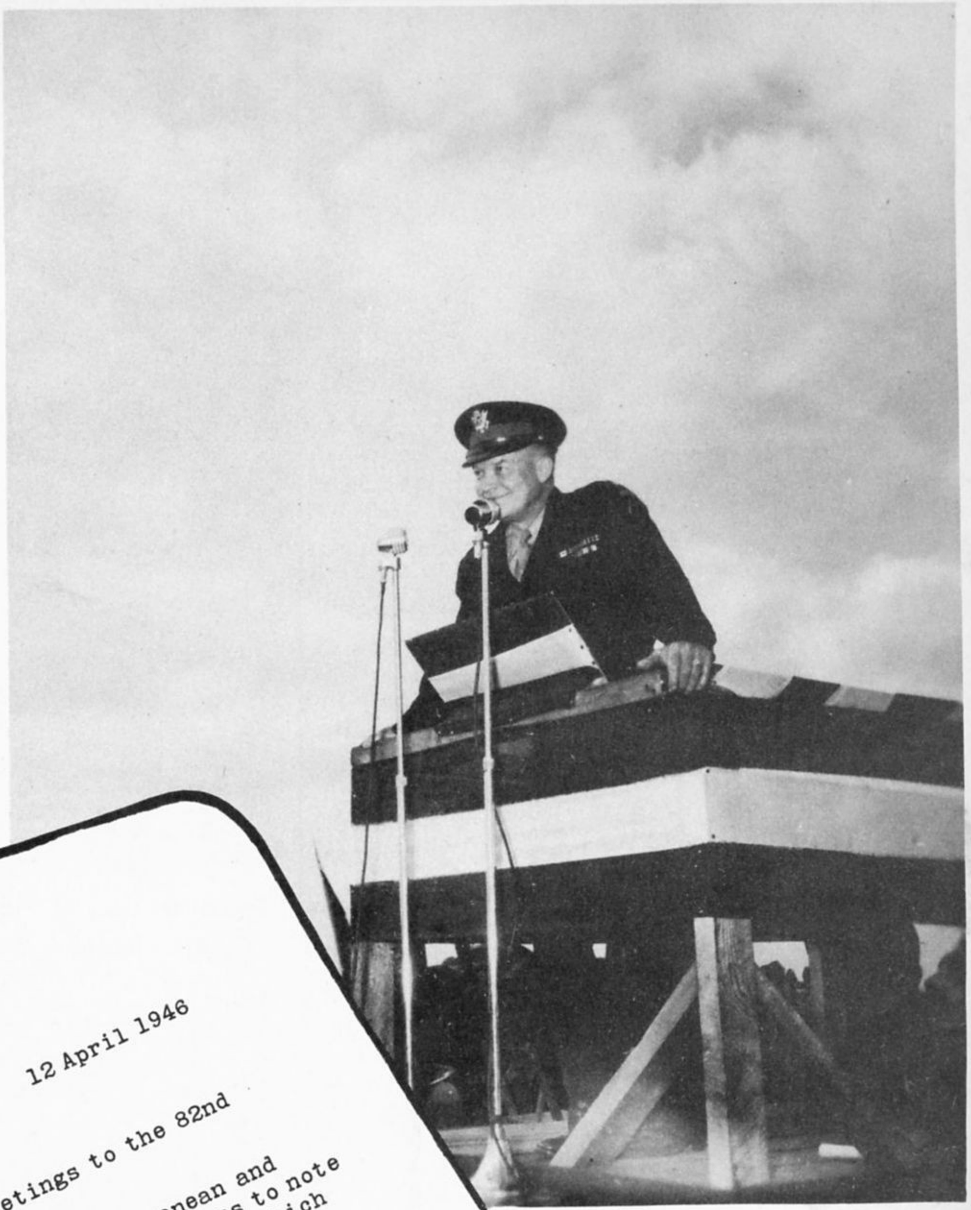
I was closely associated with the 82nd Airborne Division from the time I visited America in 1942 when the Division was only just starting its combat training up to the time I gave up command of the British Airborne Corps in Holland, of which the 82nd Airborne Division temporarily formed a part.

I watched the Division's exploits in Sicily, the first action in which they took part. I followed their doings throughout the Mediterranean Campaign; and when the Division joined the 1st Allied Airborne Army in the attack on Europe, I had the honour to be closely associated with the planning of all airborne operations, both British and American.

The Division's exploits on the Cherbourg Peninsula and throughout the European Campaign were, in my opinion, unsurpassed by any formation of the allied armies. The Division was under my direct command in the operations in Holland, and I cannot speak too highly of its gallantry and determination in holding the vital area of Nijmegen and Grave.

I have always looked upon myself as an honorary but humble member of the 82nd American Airborne Division whose outstanding record was recognized by their being chosen to represent the American Army in the Victory March in New York.

F. A. M. BROWNING
Lieutenant General



WAR DEPARTMENT
THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

12 April 1946

I am happy to extend my greetings to the 82nd Airborne Division.

In our close association in Mediterranean and European campaigns, I have had many occasions to note this division's outstanding accomplishments which contributed so materially to our final victory.

Looking to the future, I expect the veterans of the 82nd Airborne Division, who helped to secure the beachheads of Gela, Salerno, Anzio and Normandy and who fought so bravely in Holland and Belgium, to play a major role in securing the peace. I am sure they will carry into their lifelong activities the same zeal, courage and patriotism which distinguished their service in battle.

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Eisenhower

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

THE SAGA OF ALL-AMERICAN LEONARD A. FUNK

By WILLIAM WASMUTH

THE FIRST living trooper in the 82nd Airborne Division to receive the CMH in World War II was 1st Sergeant Leonard A. Funk, Company "C," 508th Parachute Infantry 30 jump veteran who hails from Wilkensburg, Pennsylvania. Carving himself a niche next to that of Sgt. Alvin C. York, famed 82nd veteran of World War I, First Sergeant Funk first distinguished himself in action in Normandy.

Although suffering from a badly sprained ankle, he gathered a group of 18 men and set a route of march which he believed would lead the group to friendly lines. With unerring accuracy he led this group across twenty miles of enemy infested territory. During the major portion of the journey he acted as lead scout refusing to jeopardize the safety of his men after three scouts had been lost. The group traveled by night and after numerous encounters with enemy groups, Sgt. Funk led them through the main line of resistance to the security of our forces. For this cougrageous act First Sergeant Funk was awarded the Silver Star.

In September 1944, Sgt. Funk again came to the fore during the Airborne operations in Holland.

Near Voxhil, Holland, Sgt. Funk led a three-man patrol against a German flak battery of three 20mm guns which were firing on American gliders then circling to land. He drove off all enemy security around the guns and led an assault which killed approximately twenty members of the crews and inflicted other casualties. The flak guns were silenced before effective fire could be placed upon the gliders due to the courageous and heroic actions of Sgt. Funk. This act of heroism brought him the Distinguished Service Cross.

Finally on the 29th of January, during the Ardennes Offensive, Sgt. Funk through quick thinking, quicker action, and unmitigated valor enabled his Company to complete its objective.

During the attack on the town of Holzeim, Belgium, Company "C" of the 508th Parachute Infantry captured eighty of the enemy and left them under guard of four "Troopers" while the main body pushed forward and finished mopping up the town.

Meanwhile three other Germans led by a paratrooper officer captured a patrol from the second battalion that was on the way to make contact with "C" Company.

Evidently this small enemy force believed the town of Holzeim was still in German hands for they brought their captives into the town. They soon realized it was a "snafu" situation but continued on anyway, in the hope of disarming the "devils in baggy pants." This they managed to do, partially due to the fact that the Krauts were in the rear and their prisoners in front of them all the while marching in a single file. The "troopers" were confused by the similiarity between the enemy's snow suits and our own.

While "Jerries" were disarming the guards, First Sergeant Funk came upon the scene with several other troopers. Things certainly seemed wrong to Funk's men and they hesitated for a few seconds which gave the enemy officer time to close in on Sgt. Funk. Again the troopers were puzzled by the similiarity in the outer garments. Meanwhile the officer shoved his Schmeisser machine pistol into Sgt. Funk's stomach and demanded that he surrender. Sgt. Funk pretended to follow his order and reached up as if to surrender his "tommy gun" but he quickly reversed the cards by blazing away at the officer, and he crumpled in a heap before him. This courageous act and quick thinking on Sgt. Funk's part started the battle between the remaining Krauts and the "troopers" which ended with the troopers in complete control of the situation once again.

Sgt. Funk was not through with just one of the enemy, but continued firing from the center of the road at some of the Heinies who were making a last desperate break for freedom, and paid with their lives. For this encounter Sgt. Funk was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor from President **Truman.**

Small, quiet, unassuming, Sgt. Funk holds every bravery decoration a field soldier can earn. He is outstanding even among Eighty-second Paratroopers.

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH ARMY
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS

10 May 1946

I was indeed proud to be a member of such a splendid fighting organization of the 82nd Division in World War I. I served throughout the active operations of the Division as the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, and participated with the Division in the defense of two sectors on the French front and in the Battles of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne. During the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne, our Division executed one of the very few mobile warfare maneuvers that I know of in the war, and perhaps the spirit of that maneuver lead to the splendid accomplishments of the Division in this war as airborne troops.

May I extend my very best wishes to all my comrades of World War I of the 82nd Division and expressions of my highest admiration to those of World War II.

Sincerely yours,

J M Wainwright

J. M. WAINWRIGHT
General, U. S. Army
Commanding

Gen. Jonathan M. (Skinny) Wainwright, hero of Corregidor, and formerly G-3 of the 82nd Division receives the Medal of Honor from President Truman at a ceremony on the White House lawn following the General's liberation from a Jap prison.

CASUALTIES

a. *Casualties*: The 82d Airborne Division occupied front line positions for a total of 316 days and suffered a total of 19,586 casualties of all types, an average of 61.98 casualties for each day, on the basis of computations made 28 May 1945.

(1) An average of 4.85 men were missing in action, each day.
(2) An average of 39.88 men were wounded each day.
(3) An average of 8.8 men were injured each day.
(4) An average of 8.43 men were killed in action or died of wounds each day.

b. *Casualties by campaign*: Figures available as of 25 October 1945 show that only 106 individuals of the 82d Airborne Division are still listed as "Missing in Action," all others listed earlier as "Missing" having been liberated from prison camps or legally declared dead. A tabulation of casualties on this basis, however, would not present a true picture of the Division's status during the particular campaign, and two sets of computations therefore are given below.

Campaign	*Missing in Action*	*Wounded in Action*		*Injured in Action*		*Killed in Action Died of Wounds*
		Not Rtd	*Rtd*	*Not Rtd*	*Rtd*	
*SICILY	48	474	336	x	x	197
*ITALY	73	1,140	799	x	x	309
*NORMANDY	661	2,373	1,554	704	502	1,142
*HOLLAND	622	1,796	821	327	196	535
**ARDENNES & RHINELAND	101	2,073	1,036	609	364	440
**CENTRAL EUROPE	30	168	34	49	31	42
TOTALS	1,535	8,024	4,580	1,689	1,093	2,665
		12,604		2,782		

*—Corrected to 12 December 1944
**—Corrected to 28 May 1945
x—Figures not kept for these campaigns

Rtd—Returned to Division
Not Rtd—Did not return to Division

Computations corrected on the basis of official reports received to 25 October 1945:

Campaign	*Missing in Action*	*Killed in Action or Died of Wounds*
SICILY	12	206
ITALY	2	327
NORMANDY	0	1,282
HOLLAND	80	658
ARDENNES & RHINELAND	7	670
CENTRAL EUROPE	5	75
TOTALS	106	3,228

On the last day of its last campaign the 82d Airborne Division liberated five of its soldiers who had been captured in Sicily and later had been "hired out" to German farmers as farm hands.

AWARDS

In addition to unit decorations from the United States, Netherlands, Belgium and France, 82d men have received the following individual decorations in World War II:

AMERICAN

Congressional Medal of Honor	4
Distinguished Service Cross	78
Distinguished Service Medal	1
Legion of Merit	32
Silver Star	894
Bronze Star	2,478

THE NETHERLANDS

Order of Orange-Nassau	
Degree of Grand Officer	1
Degree of Commander	1
Degree of Officer	5
Militaire Willems-Orde	
Degree of Knight of the Fourth Class	15
Bronze Lion	53
Bronze Cross	16

ENGLAND

Military Cross	6
Military Medal	11
Distinguished Service Order	2
Distinguished Conduct Medal	23

UNITED STATES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Order of Alexander Nevinsky	1
Order of the People's War	
1st Degree	2
2nd Degree	4
Medal of Valor	4
Medal for Combat Service	3

FRANCE

Legion of Honor	1
Croix de Guerre	
With Palm	13
With Gold Star	1
With Silver Star	7
With Bronze Star	22
Certificates	30

BELGIUM*

Order of the Leopold	
Degree of Commander	1
Degree of Officer	1
Degree of Chevalier	5
Order of the Crown	
Degree of Chevalier	3
Military Decoration, Second Class	8
Croix de Guerre, with Palm	21

*These have not been officially awarded as of this date.

SUMMARY OF DAYS IN COMBAT AREAS

(Note: The term "front line positions" is used below as any period of time in which a regimental combat team or larger group of the Division, whether or not detached from the Division, was in direct contact with enemy troops.)

Operation	*Front Line Positions*	*Corps Reserve*	*Army Reserve*	*Total*
SICILY (HUSKY)	-------	-------	-------	41
(1) 10-14 July '43	5	-------	-------	-------
15-16 July '43	-------	2	-------	-------
17-24 July '43	8	-------	-------	-------
(a) 25 July - 19 Aug. '43	-------	-------	26	-------
Sub-totals	(13)	(2)	(26)	(41)
ITALY	-------	-------	-------	163
Naples*Foggia (Avalanche) (Giant)	-------	-------	-------	-------
Rome-Arno (Shingle)	-------	-------	-------	-------
(2) 14-18 Sept. 43	5	-------	-------	-------
(3) 16-25 Sept. 43	10	-------	-------	-------
(4) 18-24 Sept. 43	7	-------	-------	-------
(5) 25 Sept. - 2 Oct. '43	7	-------	-------	-------
(6) 4-7 Oct. '43	4	-------	-------	-------
(7) 27 Oct. - 25 Nov. '43	30	-------	-------	-------
(8) 6 Dec. '43 - 1 Jan. '44	27	-------	-------	-------
(9) 22 Jan. - 23 March '44	62	-------	-------	-------
(10) (b) 3 Oct. - 19 Nov. '43	(net)	-------	21	-------
Net sub-totals	(142)	-------	(21)	(163)
NORMANDY (NEPTUNE)	-------	-------	-------	38
6 June - 8 July '44	33	-------	-------	-------
9-11 July '44	-------	3	-------	-------
12-13 July '44	-------	-------	2	-------
Sub-totals	(35)	(3)	(2)	(38)
HOLLAND (MARKET)	-------	-------	-------	58
(Rhineland)				
17 Sept. - 13 Nov. '44	58	-------	-------	-------
ARDENNES	-------	-------	-------	63
18 Dec. '44 - 13 Jan. '45	25	-------	-------	-------
12-27 Jan. '45	-------	16	-------	-------
28 Jan. - 4 Feb. '45	8	-------	-------	-------
5 Feb. '45	-------	1	-------	-------
6 - 18 Feb. '45	13	-------	-------	-------
Sub-totals	(46)	(17)	-------	(63)
CENTRAL EUROPE	-------	-------	-------	59
4-16 April '45	13	-------	-------	-------
(c) 17-25 April '45	-------	9	-------	-------
26-27 April '45	-------	-------	2	-------
28 April - 8 May '45	11	-------	-------	-------
(d) 9 May - 1 June '45	-------	24	-------	-------
Sub-totals	(24)	(33)	(2)	(59)
Grand Totals	316	55	51	422

TOTAL DAYS IN COMBAT—BY YEAR:

1943	141
1944	173
1945	108
TOTAL	422

TOTAL DAYS IN COMBAT AS A RESULT OF—

AIRBORNE DEPLOYMENT	
Sicily	41
Italy	20
Normandy	38
Holland	58
TOTAL	157

GROUND DEPLOYMENT	
Italy	143
Ardennes	63
Central Europe	57
TOTAL	265

(1) 505, 504 Prcht RCTs
(2) 505, 505 Prcht RCTs
(3) 325 Gli RCT
(4) Div on right flank of Fifth Army
(5) Div on Sorrento Ridge and Naples Plain
(6) 505 Prcht RCT on Volturne River
(7) 504 Prcht RCT in Insernia Sector
(8) 504 Prcht RCT in Venafro Sector
(9) 504 Prcht RCT on Anzio Beachhead
(10) Net, does not include periods 4-7 Oct. '43 or 27 Oct-25 Nov. '43.
(a) Also occupational duty in Western Sicily.
(b) Also occupational duty in Naples. Does not include periods 504 Prcht RCT was in Corps or Army Reserve after Div proper left Italy.
(c) Also occupational duty in Cologne, Germany, area.
(d) Also occupational duty in Ludwigslust, Germany, area.

82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION

During World War II the 82nd Airborne Division fought under 10 Allied Armies and 19 Corps. The following subordinate units were a permanently assigned part of the Division throughout World War II:

Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company
82 Abn. M. P. Platoon
325 Glider Infantry
504 Prcht. Inf.
505 Prcht. Inf.
Hq. and Hq. Btry Div. Arty
319 Glider F. A. Bn.
320 Glider F. A. Bn.
376 Prcht. F. A. Bn.
456 Prcht. F. A. Bn.
80 Abn. AA Bn.
307 Abn. Engr. Bn.
407 Abn. QM Co.
307 Abn. Med. Co.
821 Abn. Sig. Co.
782 Abn. Ord. Maint. Co.
82 Abn. Rcn. Platoon
82nd Parachute Maintenance Co.

The following units were attached to the 82nd Abn. Div. for long periods of time and are considered a vital part of the Division during its combat period:

508th Parachute Infantry—Normandy, Holland, Ardennes and Rhineland.
401st Glider Inf. (2nd Bn.)—Normandy, Holland, Ardennes, Rhineland.
507th Parachute Inf.—Normandy.
666th Q.M. Trk. Co.—Holland, Ardennes, Central Europe.

ATTACHED UNITS

The following units were attached to the Division during the campaigns and dates indicated:

NORTH AFRICA

(Complete records of attachments in North Africa are not currently available)
2d Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry
---------------------------- Engineer Co. (Cam)
334th Quartermaster Company (Depot)

SICILY

(Complete records of attachments in Sicily are not currently available)
39th Regimental Combat Team
26th Field Artillery Battalion
34th Field Artillery Battalion
62d Field Artillery Battalion
77th Field Artillery Battalion
20th Engineer Battalion (C)
83d Chemical Battalion (4.2" Mortar)

ITALY

(Complete records of attachments in Italy are not currently available)
3d Ranger Battalion (to 504th Parachute RCT)
--------------- Ghurka Battalion, British (to 504th Parachute RCT)

ENGLAND

-------------------------- Quartermaster Truck Company
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2d Airborne Brigade
(From 20 January 1944 to 27 August 1944)
507th Parachute Infantry (From 20 January 1944 to 27 August 1944)
508th Parachute Infantry (From 20 January 1944 to 30 March 1945)

ATTACHED UNITS—Continued

NORMANDY

Unit	*From*	*To*
Troop B, 4th Cav Rcn Sqdn	1 June 1944	23 June 1944
87th Armd FA Bn	1 June 1944	8 June 1944
	14 June 1944	8 July 1944
Co C, 746th Tk Bn	1 June 1944	11 June 1944
Co A, 746th Tk Bn	13 June 1944	21 June 1944
Co A, 712th Tk Bn	1 July 1944	8 July 1944
188th FA Bn	12 June 1944	8 July 1944
172d FA Bn	16 June 1944	19 June 1944
Co C, 899th TD Bn	1 June 1944	19 June 1944
Co A, 607th TD Bn	19 June 1944	4 July 1944
801 TD Bn	30 June 1944	1 July 1944
803 TD Bn	1 July 1944	8 July 1944
Co B, 87th Chem Mortar Bn	15 June 1944	21 June 1944
Co D, 86th Chem Mortar Bn	1 July 1944	4 July 1944
3809 QM Trk Co		
3810 QM Trk Co		
1st Plat 603d QM GR Co		
1 Plat, 464th Amb Co, 31st Med Gp		
493d Collecting Co, 179th Med Bn		
374th Collecting Co, 50th Med Bn		
429th Litter Bearing Platoon		
591st Collecting Co		

HOLLAND

Unit A, 50th Field Hosp	17 September 1944	
666th QM Trk Co	19 September 1944	
1st Coldstream Gds Armd Bn (Br.)	19 September 1944	22 September 1944
5th Coldstream Gds Inf Bn (Br.)	19 September 1944	22 September 1944
2d Irish Gds Bn (Br.)	19 September 1944	22 September 1944
Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry (Br.)	19 September 1944	10 October 1944
Royals Recce Bn (Br.)	19 September 1944	9 October 1944
Polish Prcht Brigade	25 September 1944	30 September 1944
231st Brigade (Br.)	30 September 1944	1 October 1944
3d Gds Brigade (Br.)	30 September 1944	1 October 1944
5th Coldstream Gds Inf Bn (Br.)	30 September 1944	10 October 1944
79th FA Regt (Br.)	30 September 1944	2 October 1944
304th AT Btry (Br.)	30 September 1944	3 October 1944
506th Prcht Inf	1 October 1944	3 October 1944
502d Prcht Inf	3 October 1944	4 October 1944
130th Inf Brigade (Br.)	5 October 1944	6 October 1944
2d Gren Gds Bn (Br.)	6 October 1944	7 October 1944
13/18 Hussars	10 October 1944	10 November 1944

ARDENNES

Unit A, 50th Field Hosp		
666th QM Trk Co		
Co C, 563d AAA AW Bn	18 December 1944	25 December 1944
CC "B", 9th Armd Div	23 December 1944	24 December 1944
Co B, 86th Cml Bn	25 December 1944	11 January 1945
254th FA Bn	20 December 1944	18 February 1945
551st Prcht Inf Bn	25 December 1944	12 January 1945
703d TD Bn	20 December 1944	1 January 1945
591st FA Bn	20 December 1944	11 January 1945
740th Tk Bn	29 December 1944	11 January 1945
	27 January 1945	5 February 1945
628th Td Bn	1 January 1945	11 January 1945
517th Prcht Inf	1 January 1945	11 January 1945
	1 February 1945	4 February 1945
634th AAA Bn	5 February 1945	18 February 1945
887th Abn Engr Co	25 December 1944	12 January 1945
Co A, 87th Cml Bn	25 January 1945	5 February 1945
643d TD Bn	25 January 1945	31 January 1945
400th Armd FA Bn	25 January 1945	18 February 1945
32d Cav Rcn Sqdn	28 January 1945	5 February 1945
629th TD Bn	31 January 1945	18 February 1945

ATTACHED UNITS—Continued

CENTRAL EUROPE

341st Inf	4 April 1945	4 April 1945
417th FA Gp	4 April 1945	25 April 1945
746th FA Bn	4 April 1945	25 April 1945
672d FA Bn	4 April 1945	14 April 1945
541st FA Bn	4 April 1945	25 April 1945
805th FA Bn	4 April 1945	16 April 1945
546th FA Bn	11 April 1945	16 April 1945
790th FA Bn	10 April 1945	14 April 1945
74th Cml Gen Co	4 April 1945	21 April 1945
74th FA Bn	18 April 1945	25 April 1945
12th TD Gp (Hq only)	18 April 1945	25 April 1945
661st FA Bn	18 April 1945	25 April 1945
942d FA Bn	18 April 1945	25 April 1945
3d Co, 22d Belgian Fus Bn	21 April 1945	25 April 1945
294th FA Obs Bn	25 April 1945	25 April 1945
1130th Engr C Bn	25 April 1945	26 April 1945
280th FA Bn	27 April 1945	17 May 1945
580th AAA AW Bn	26 April 1945	2 May 1945
	23 May 1945	5 June 1945
13th Infantry	28 April 1945	1 May 1945
43d FA Bn	28 April 1945	1 May 1945
604th TD Bn	28 April 1945	15 May 1945
Sqdn A, 4th Royals (Br.)	29 April 1945	2 May 1945
740th Tk Bn	29 April 1945	1 May 1945
644th TD Bn	29 April 1945	1 May 1945
Co A, 89th Cml Bn	29 April 1945	9 May 1945
121st Inf	30 April 1945	1 May 1945
56th FA Bn	30 April 1945	1 May 1945
Co C, 89th Cml Bn	30 April 1945	1 May 1945
CC "B", 7th Armd Div	1 May 1945	4 May 1945
205th FA Gp	3 May 1945	17 May 1945
207th FA Bn	3 May 1945	17 May 1945
768th FA Bn	3 May 1945	17 May 1945

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TEAMS ATTACHED IN ETOUSA

82D Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment
Interrogator Prisoner of War Team No. 40
Interrogator Prisoner of War Team No. 43
Interrogator Prisoner of War Team No. 45
Interrogator Prisoner of War Team No. 47
Military Intelligence Interpreter Team No. 412
Order of Battle Team No. 16
Photo Interpretation Team No. 3
Photo Interpretation Team No. 11

THIS BOOK PRODUCED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

W. Forrest Dawson

Credits

Saga of the "All American" was compiled and edited by W. Forrest Dawson.

Illustrations by Linzee Prescott;

Layout and Design — William Embry, Ed. Grunewald.

Most of the combat photographs in Saga of the "All American" were taken by 82nd Division photographers — George Norton, Dan Bost, Russel Miller, Emitt Shirley, Henry Grotte, Al Byers, Fred Fraks and William Embry. Army Pictorial Section, Air Corps photo section, and the National Archives also contributed greatly to the success of this book.

Editorial and mechanical assistance was rendered by Luther Richardson, DiVann Weert, John C. Reynolds, William Miller, William Embry, Mildred Carroll, Linda Roberts, Joyce McSherry, Pat Dean, Pearl Feldman, Captain Charles W. Mason, John Timmer, James Timmer, Tony Polisavo, Loyd F. Quint, Hunter Marston, Tony Ketterson, Robert Wilson, David Whittier, Robert Debram.

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Italy Text—Reference Rockwell Kent, Cosmopolitan Magazine, James M. Gavin, Infantry Journal, David Whittier, Devils in Baggy Pants.

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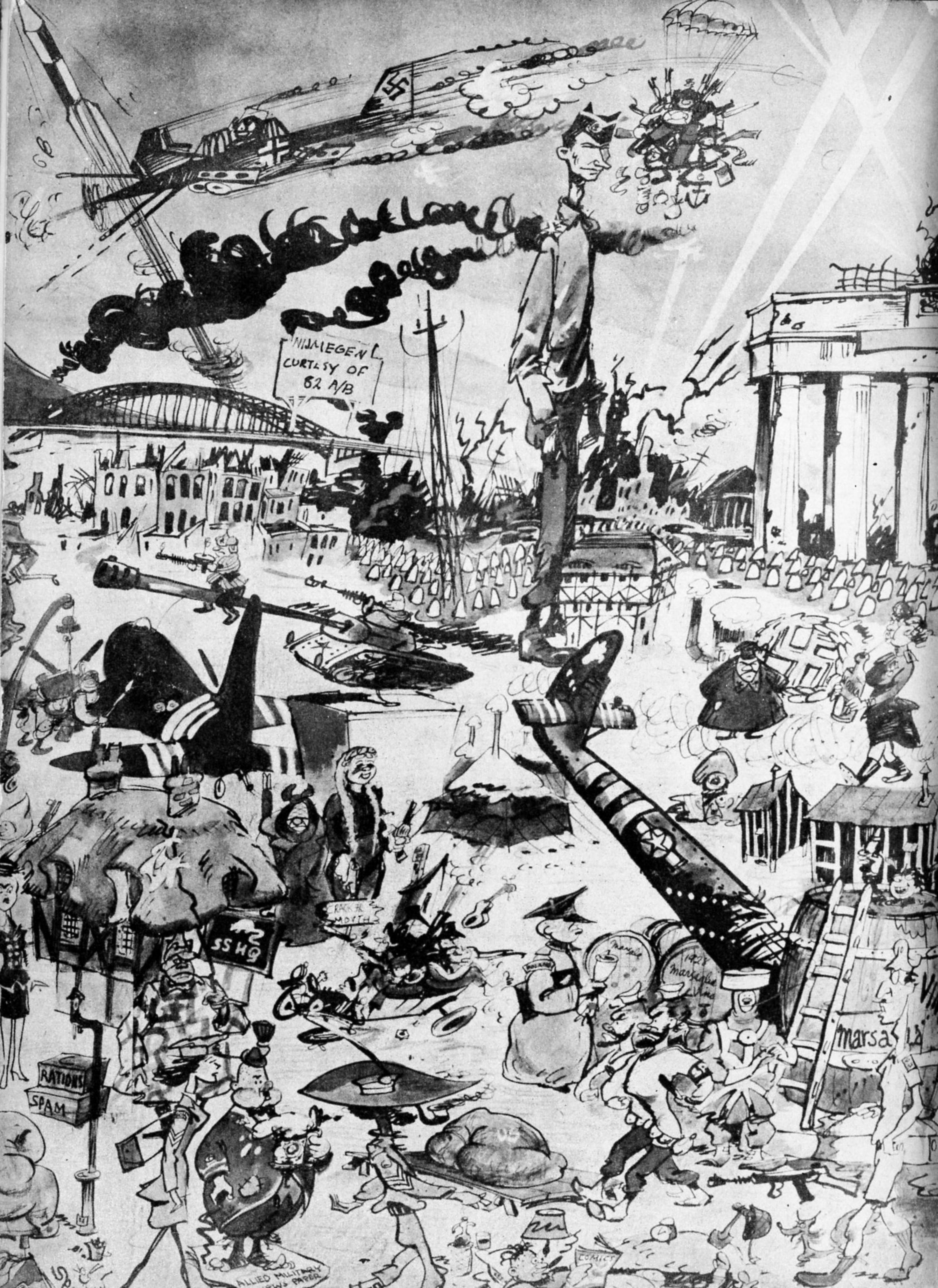
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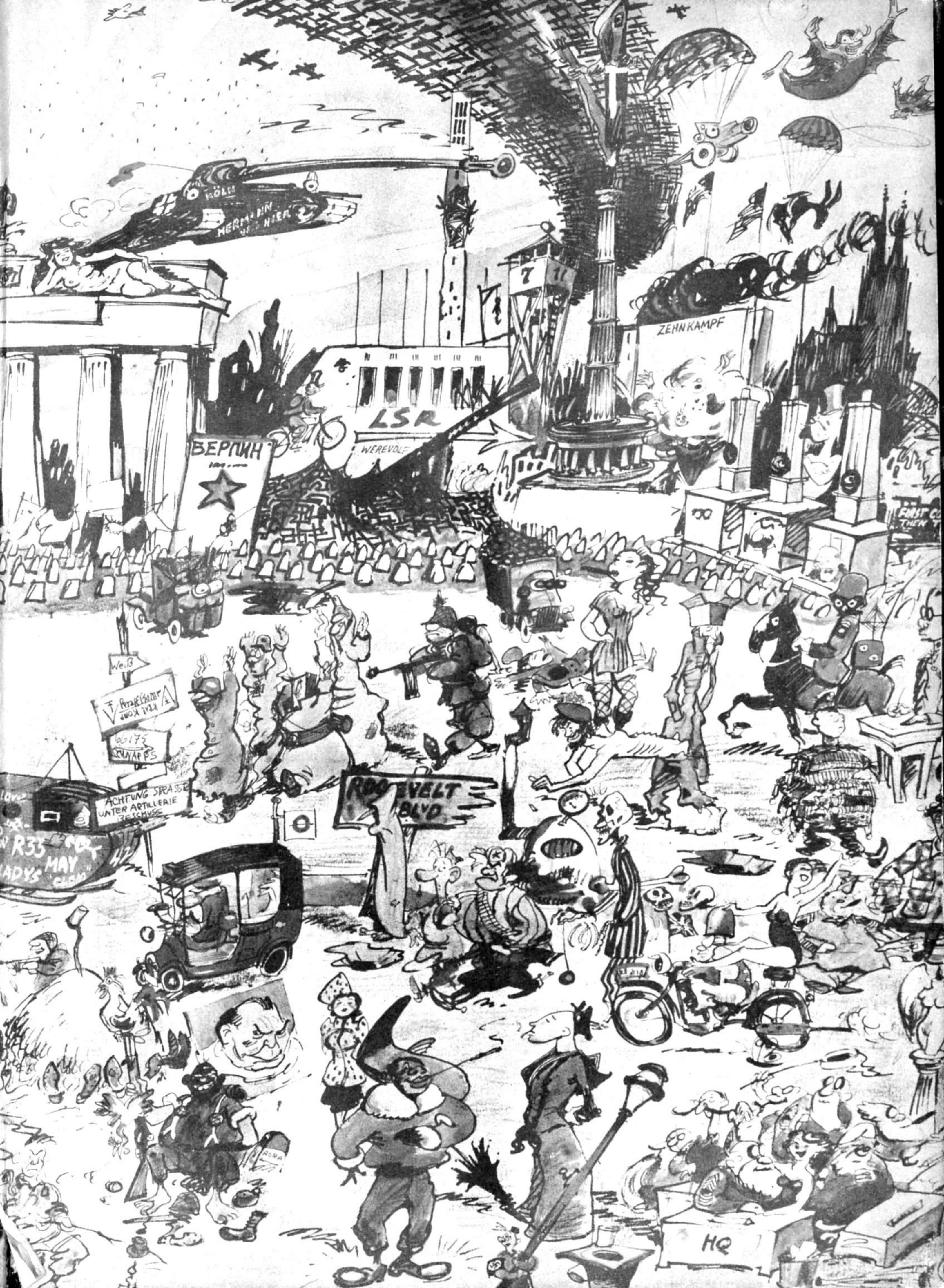
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82nd Airborne Division

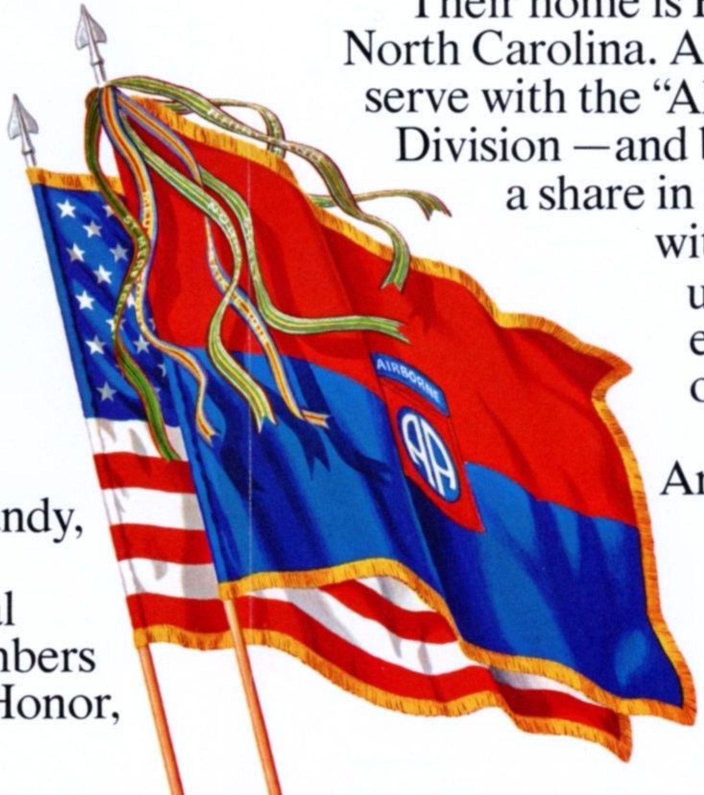
"All American." The 82nd Airborne Division.

Activated in August 1917, the "All American" Division went to France in 1918, where it participated in three major offensives, claiming Medal of Honor winners Lieutenant Colonel Emory J. Pike and the renowned Sgt. Alvin C. York.

As America's first airborne division in World War II, the "All American" participated in the campaigns of Sicily, Naples-Foggia, Normandy, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland and Central Europe. Division members won three Medals of Honor, 79 Distinguished Service Crosses, 32 Legions of Merit, 894 Silver Stars, 2,478 Bronze Stars and numerous foreign decorations.

On February 13, 1968, the Division's 3rd Brigade with attachments deployed to Vietnam. In 1968, a 4th Brigade was activated, bringing the "All American" back to full strength.

Their home is Fort Bragg, North Carolina. And you can serve with the "All American" Division —and be guaranteed a share in its history— with the Army's unit-of-choice enlistment option.

See your Army Recruiter. Tell him you want to serve with the "All American."